

NEW ACTORS, NEW MODELS, NEW OUTCOMES?

African countries' engagement with China and other development partners in achieving the SDGs and Agenda 2063



An Oxfam-organized event to discuss the SDGs and Agenda 2063 in Lusaka, Zambia. Photo: Oxfam

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Understanding how Africa can engage with global development partners to provide more effective support for implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 is crucial to realizing the continent's development aspirations. This report provides a detailed assessment of the key development platforms – the SDGs, Agenda 2063 and FOCAC – and how Africans can mobilize around a Common African Position on Implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 at the level of national governments, regional economic communities and the African Union, with an aim to improve coordination and cooperation of best practices in development between emerging and traditional partners.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The launching of a new Agenda for Development in 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the near concurrent promulgation of the African Union's Agenda 2063 offer an opportunity for Africans and external partners alike to consider how they might best achieve these development aims for the continent. The major objective of this study is to produce a research report on how African countries can effectively engage China and other development partners and investors (traditional and emerging) in achieving SDGs and Agenda 2063.

The report reflects on the experience of the Millennium Development Goals as background to this SDG/Agenda 2063 process and considers what lessons have been learned that might help to improve policy formulation and delivery of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. These include supporting the betterment of national statistical services and harmonizing development indices.

It analyses the reasons why China and other development partners and investors are becoming more involved in African countries, examining the economic rationales as well as other sources of interest in the continent. China's engagement is given special focus, recognizing its leading position in the African economies as the top trading partner and a major investor, as well as a source of development cooperation through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and bilateral ties. Moreover, the report explains how deepening Chinese engagement has inspired greater involvement in a wider range of African issues in recent years.

The report outlines and analysis the development assistance and investments desirable for African countries to achieve SDGs and Agenda 2063. The synergies between the SDGs and Agenda 2063 are recognized, as are areas where they diverge, and the opportunities and challenges they pose for external partners. FOCAC VI's Action Plan is described in detail and compared to the key SDGs and Agenda 2063 objectives, recognizing where they align and how that proximity of purpose could be better mobilized to achieve these aims.

The report provides a broad-based comparative analysis on how African countries engage with other development partners and investors (traditional and emerging) in achieving SDGs and Agenda 2063. Focus is given to Japan, Brazil and India – all leading development partners with the continent – and their particular approach to supporting African countries to make improvements towards sustainable development.

The report assesses how Africa can engage with global development partners to enhance their capacity to provide effective support for implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. This includes mobilizing around a Common African Position on Implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 at the level of national governments, regional economic communities (RECs) and the African Union, with an aim to improve coordination and cooperation of best practices in development between emerging and traditional partners.

Finally, the report concludes by setting out a range of policy recommendations tailored for each of the major actors involved in the African development process. It suggests, among other things, that significant improvements in development efficiency can be made through better data collection and harmonizing development indicators between African governments, emerging partners and traditional partners. The promotion of a Common African Position on Implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 would facilitate this process.

INTRODUCTION

The transition from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), when aligned to the aims set forth in the African Union's Agenda 2063, offers Africa a unique opportunity to build upon the gains for the last decade and a half and to direct policies and practices into achieving long-term development. While the eight main pillars of the MDGs were primarily aimed at raising social standards in development, the SDGs integrate key features of the productive sector into the development plans, in the form of seventeen key goals. Though there is some variation with that proposed in the SDGs, the African Union's own Agenda 2063 shares much of the same focus in its own series of sequenced ten-year plans for continental transformation.

While African states, subregional and regional organizations are all formally committed to achieving these admirable long-term development goals, the task of transforming ideas into reality is one which all parties recognize requires a collaborative effort by the international community. Traditional OECD-DAC partners like the European Union, the United States and Japan are themselves committed to orienting their development assistance programmes in line with the SDGs and – by default – Agenda 2063, therefore enhancing the possibility of making substantive progress across Africa in the coming decade. Emerging partners denotes a non-Western (usually OECD) developing country of the South, who may have had an historical relationship with Africa and are more recently engaged through South–South Development Cooperation. The role of China, an emerging partner whose financial wherewithal, trade standing, institutional capabilities and development record set it apart from the likes of other emerging partners such as India and Brazil, is a country which deserves special attention in this process. Indeed, as the continent's largest trading partner since 2009,¹ a major financier and builder of infrastructure as well as an investor of growing importance, there are great expectations among Africans and the international community at large that Beijing will play a significant part in supporting policies and mobilizing the resources necessary to realize the SDGs and Agenda 2063. These expectations are derived from the intensifying involvement of China in key aspects of African development over the past few years, signified and captured in the triennial Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) process launched in 2000.²

The major objective of this study is to produce a research report on how African countries can effectively engage China and other development partners and investors (traditional and emerging) in achieving SDGs and Agenda 2063. The specific objectives are to:

- Use the experience in Millennium Development Goals as background to this process;
- Unpack the reasons why China and other development partners and investors are becoming more involved in African countries;
- Outline and analyze the development assistance and investments desirable for African countries to achieve SDGs and Agenda 2063;
- Unveil the opportunities and challenges in engaging China and other development partners to achieve SDGs and Agenda 2063;
- Provide a thorough comparative analysis on how African countries engage China and other development partners and investors (traditional and emerging) in achieving SDGs and Agenda 2063;
- Proffer policy recommendations for the major actors involved in the research.

It will do so by providing, first, a short examination of the overall transition from MDGs to SDGs and the Agenda 2063, including an assessment of the synergies between the SDGs and Agenda 2063; this will be followed by an overview of Chinese engagement in African development; an analysis of the specific linkages between FOCAC VI commitments and three SDGs/Agenda 2063 goals; a broad-based comparison with three other development partners and how they have sought to support Africa's attainment of the SDGs/Agenda 2063; and, finally, recommendations emerging from this report.

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METHODOLOGY

This report was commissioned as a desk study of the topic and, as such, utilized a wide range of secondary sources including academic publications, reports produced by governments, regional organizations, development agencies, development-oriented non-governmental organizations, civil society, think-tanks, media outputs (interviews and news accounts). Qualitative and quantitative materials were consulted, though regarding the latter case (and in keeping with the TOR) no original data sets were compiled for analysis. Particular effort was made to seek out a variety of materials (see bibliography) so as to go beyond traditional sources to garner information and local analysis as appropriate. Comparative analysis across regions using mostly qualitative methods and secondary sources is increasingly recognized as a cogent form of critical scholarship aimed at providing academics and policy making communities with the means of building knowledge.³

The conceptual framework for the study focuses on the institutional dimensions of the engagement between Africa and emerging and traditional partners. In particular, the policy discourses, policy practices and institutional arrangements pursued by these global development partners towards Africa will be critically examined and analysed pursuant to the following questions: how are emerging and traditional partners utilizing and proposing to use their economic cooperation and aid policies to assist Africa in addressing the SDGs and Agenda 2063? What does policy convergence between emerging and traditional partners and Africa on key development targets suggest about the content and trajectory of cooperation? What steps are African governments, regional economic communities and continental bodies taking to facilitate the implementation of cooperative arrangements with these global development partners aimed at meeting the SDGs and Agenda 2063?

At the same time, some of the challenges facing researchers of this topic, widely acknowledged in the literature, are the absence of comparable data or the outright lack of data as produced by the development partners.⁴ Comparative analysis of development assistance programmes between different emerging powers as well as between emerging powers as a category and traditional donors is therefore problematic, hampering any assessment of aid or economic assistance programmes. This is exacerbated by the emphasis on project-based assistance pursued by most emerging powers, which give greater focus to an aid metric founded on quantity rather than qualitative outcomes. Economic assistance – usually under the rubric of ‘South–South Development Cooperation’ – is often linked to general targets or outcomes; however, there is rarely any monitoring and evaluation or related outcomes-based studies produced by emerging powers.



A group of experts reviewed the draft report on 28 February 2016.

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1 SETTING THE STAGE: FROM MDGS TO SDGS AND AGENDA 2063

Launched at a UN Summit in September 2000, the MDGs were unprecedented in their scope and ambition for development. The simplicity of their focus notwithstanding – eight goals whose primary orientation was aimed at improving outputs in the social sector – their promulgation brought a degree of ‘buy-in’ from Western donors, who were alleged to be suffering from ‘donor fatigue’ in the final years of the previous millennium. Fifteen years on, though rapid gains in China and India produced significant impact on a positive reading of the aggregated achievements of the MDGs, there was genuine to limited improvement in the conditions experienced by Africans in most of the eight target sectors.⁵ According to the African Development Bank (AfDB), by 2015 the continent was deemed to be ‘on target’ to achieve only three goals (Goal 2 – universal primary education; Goal 3 – gender equality; Goal 6 – HIV/Aids, malaria and other diseases).

Disaggregating the African experience with the MDGs is important to understand how these development targets served to motivate policy making and channel resources towards meeting these objectives. From the Monterrey Conference in 2002 onwards, most donor countries committed to increasing the quantity of overseas development assistance (ODA) aimed at poverty reduction and made serious attempts to integrate the MDGs into their development financing and programme approaches; concurrently, many recipient countries sought to align national development plans to reflect the MDGs.⁶ The combined efforts of international agencies, through initiatives such as the ‘Integrated Implementation Framework’, which publicly tracked commitments and delivery by donors on MDG 8, and non-governmental organizations, which provided complementary assessments of national and international performance in meeting the MDGs, contributed to maintaining the pressure on donors.⁷ More generalized critiques of uneven delivery of donor support for MDGs (and its impact therefore on development attainment) and the unintended impact of imprecise targets accompanied analysis of the development initiative over its 15-year cycle.⁸

Building on this, critics were quick to point out that the MDGs themselves contained some problematic features that produced biased readings of African performance.⁹ For instance, they did not take account of initial conditions within African countries which impacted upon their ability to achieve far-ranging transformative goals (such as reducing poverty by half within 15 years, a much more difficult task for countries at the lowest levels of economic development to start with), while the targets set for measuring achievement were sometimes of questionable value, especially in the context of weak statistical services and poor data capture. Weak institutions, limited local capacity and poorly integrated programming of MDGs into national development plans further inhibited the potential gains to be derived from the MDGs.¹⁰ The limitations of basic infrastructure in many African countries necessarily raised the costs of expanding social outreach beyond the urban areas, thus reducing its impact.¹¹ Regional diversity impacted upon the African performance as well. For instance, when one removed the countries of northern Africa from the calculus, poverty fell in sub-Saharan Africa from 56.5 percent in 1990 to 48.4 by 2010.¹² Only Botswana and Equatorial Guinea were able to meet the first MDG target of halving poverty over the 15-year period.

According to the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the central lessons of the MDG process for Africa can be summarized as the following:¹³

- Differences in the initial conditions of countries need to be taken into account when measuring overall progress towards achieving development goals. The baseline can be much higher in some sectors than in others, making attainment within the fixed period more easily achieved for some and less so for others.
- Effective communication and follow-up were vital to maintaining momentum and progress in achieving the MDGs.

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- The sustainability of investments in hard infrastructure can only be achieved with complementary investments in recurrent costs and human development.
- Development must be focused on underlying root causes, not the symptoms, to be effective. These include policies that: support structural transformation, domestic resource mobilization and public expenditure management; promote fair trade and trade facilitation; combat illicit financial outflows; and support good governance.
- Global development agendas, to be successful, require credible and committed means of implementation that takes into account financial and non-financial factors.
- As goals are often interrelated, putting energy into those goals which have the greatest 'knock-on effect' is desirable.
- Furthermore, effective low-cost policies can be undertaken which have the greatest impact by focusing on the most vulnerable populations, i.e., women and girls, the extremely poor and rural communities.

Even as the MDG process was drawing to a close, the international development community began a process of devising a new set of targets. The structure of the Post-2015 Development Agenda not only sought to build upon the areas of development attainment to date, but to deepen these achievements and expand the overall development remit into new areas. For its proponents, the aim was to produce a truly universal set of objectives that spoke not only to the eradication of poverty in developing countries, but the elimination of inequality in developed countries as well. Most importantly, the Rio+20 commitments to sustainable development directly influenced the integration of climate change mitigation measures as a key feature of achieving these new objectives (see below).¹⁴ Indeed, for the international development community '(t)hey mark a new era in thinking about international development – one which binds people together to address pressing global challenges such as gender injustice, increasing economic inequality and climate change.'¹⁵ Even the United States government recognized the relevance of the Post-2015 Development Agenda to its own circumstances, with its representative to the UN, Samantha Power, declaring that the new goals and targets would apply to former President Obama's domestic efforts to combat inequality and reduce its carbon emissions.¹⁶

Seventeen goals and 169 targets were identified by the UN Open Working Group and formally launched at a special UN Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2015. These goals deliberately included productive sectors such as industrialization and agriculture, which had not featured in the original MDGs, as well as a new commitment to addressing inequality on a global scale.¹⁷ The SDGs were expected to provide guidance for national development planning and to shape international development cooperation in the coming 15 years.

Box 1: AGENDA 2030 – the Sustainable Development Goals

1. No Poverty – speeding the decline of extreme poverty above all
2. Zero Hunger – ending both acute famines and chronic malnourishment
3. Good Health and Well-Being – targeting infant mortality, endemics and pandemics
4. Quality Education – universalizing primary education in particular
5. Gender Equality – pursuing its multiplier effect' on sustainable development
6. Clean Water and Sanitation – fighting desertification and growing relative water scarcity
7. Affordable and Clean Energy – emphasizing conservation and alternatives to fossil fuels
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth – expanding the middle class via productivity and growth
9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure – investing to drive entrepreneurship

- 10.Reduced Inequalities – reversing the widening income gap as an urgent necessity
- 11.Sustainable Cities and Communities – revisoning global urbanization more sustainably
- 12.Responsible Consumption and Production – efficiently managing the resource-to-waste cycle
- 13.Climate Action – mitigating the worldwide impact of climate change
- 14.Life Below Water – protecting the world’s oceans from further abuses
- 15.Life on Land – conserving forests and farmland for the future
- 16.Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – upholding human rights for peace, security and development
- 17.Partnerships for the Goals – enhancing North-South and South-South partnerships

Source: UNDP. ‘The Sustainable Development Goals Report’ New York: United Nations, 2016.

This reflected the changing economic circumstances in many developing countries, including African states which had seen their economies grow at a steady annual rate of over five percentage points per annum since 2000, and the resulting assertion of a broader set of development priorities.¹⁸ Commencing in 2001, the last decade has seen a remarkable rise of African economies, with solid, sustained growth rates in more than 30 countries, vast improvements in vital infrastructure and the emergence of a nascent consumer class. Once characterized as the ‘hopeless continent’, the region is now attracting unprecedented global interest as state-led initiatives and private investors search for opportunities in the commodity sector and its burgeoning markets.¹⁹ During this period, Africa hosted 13 of the world’s top 20 fastest growing economies, driven in part by new sources of investment from Asia.²⁰ Infrastructure financing, often backed by resources and linked to Chinese-led economic cooperation, is beginning to open up trade both between countries and to the interior of the continent. Even major news magazines and scholars belatedly recognized the changing landscape in Africa, suggesting that the long-sought conditions for an African development ‘take-off’ finally appear to be in place.²¹

Despite the dramatic changes to Africa’s economic landscape, there remain significant development challenges in the years ahead if the continent is to embed its current successes on a sustainable basis. Vulnerabilities appear stark in sub-Saharan African economies on the back of economic slowdown in China and the apparent end of the commodity super-cycle. It is not just China whose economy has shown susceptibility to market vicissitudes; emerging markets too have, in the recent past, experienced weaker growth.²² All of this casts a sharp spotlight on sub-Saharan Africa’s heavy dependence on commodities, as well as the vitality of South–South Development Cooperation as a viable external strategy for these countries. The vulnerabilities suffered by African countries in the wake of fall in demand for commodities, especially intensifying in commodity-dependent countries, could be a sign of tough times ahead for African countries. Poverty is still endemic in many countries, especially outside the urban areas; there remains an over-reliance on commodities by African economies; continuing difficulties in institutional capacity and governance raise questions as to Africa’s ability to fully manage and profit from this enhanced economic interest; and, finally, the spectre of state fragility, as demonstrated in South Sudan and Mali, still threatens regional stability. Moreover, the obstacles to more sustained growth in both low-income and middle-income countries include poor productivity in agriculture, where Africa potentially has a comparative advantage; the low levels of employment-generating industries that could address the youth bulge; and a debilitating backlog in basic infrastructure which limits the scope of trade both nationally and within the regional economic communities.

A key distinction from the MDGs was the effort to universalize the development agenda to include concerns of growing inequalities within developed and emerging economies, by-products of the rapid growth and persistent gap between haves and have-nots. Maintaining the global momentum on poverty alleviation among the least developed countries was a

fundamental starting point for the construction of a Post-2015 Development Agenda. Recognizing the changing status and new challenges facing emerging powers, themselves confronting stark income differences exacerbated by urban–rural and regional inequalities, was one of the rationales behind the creation of a new development agenda that was explicitly universal in its approach. Achieving buy-in from the Western countries, whose publics are increasingly asking for a strengthening of national interests (however controversially defined) in the structuring of development assistance programmes, was another component behind this approach. The Post-2015 Development Agenda's slogan 'leave no one behind' sought to capture the commitment to address inequality in all countries, reinforcing the belief that, as one NGO declared, 'the goals are relevant to everyone, whether in the UK, Brazil or Kenya'.²³

Equally, the incorporation of an understanding of necessity of promoting 'sustainable development', informed by the alarming scientific evidence on the growing impact of climate change, which had accumulated since 2000, marked a change from the prior focus of the MDGs. In this regard, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, commonly referred to as Rio+20, held in 2012, exercised considerable influence over the shape of the new development agenda.²⁴ In particular, the recommendations of Rio+20's outcome document, 'The World We Want', called for the integration of environmental issues, biodiversity concerns and climate change mitigation into the formulation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. At the same time, incorporating these concerns brought to the table many of the debates that complicated global action on climate change, such as the relationship between developed and developing countries on the definition of the 'right to development', as well as the recognition of 'special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries' which resurfaced in this context.²⁵

A further difference from the previous MDG initiative was the incorporation of 'new' methodologies of development, namely South–South Development Cooperation, which had been formally integrated into the OECD-DAC process after the Busan Summit in 2011.²⁶ This later addition also was a by-product of the rise of 'non-traditional' partners like China and Brazil, whose development cooperation strategies were predicated more overtly on a mutual interest basis founded on the principles of fostering technical and economic cooperation between countries of the South.²⁷ This contrasts with the preliminary efforts by OECD-DAC members to socialize China, India and Brazil (as well as smaller emerging countries) into the prevailing Development Assistance Committee's donor development outlook and practices in the early part of the new millennium. Despite successes such as South Korea and partial successes like Brazil, the larger emerging powers like China (despite its participation in a DAC study group on Africa, see below) and India remained resolute in maintaining its distance from adopting the OECD-DAC approach.

Arguably, this expansion of the Post-2015 Development Agenda beyond the traditional confines of Western donors and their established institutions is a step towards realizing the commitment to universalize the new development aims and ultimately recalibrating practices in line with the expanding participation of so-called non-traditional 'donors'. This trend has been reinforced through the launching of Chinese-led development banks, especially the BRICS New Bank in 2013 and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in 2014, both of which offer developing countries alternative sources of financing for development (though on terms which largely reflect 'best practice' found in established international financial institutions). In this respect, the decision by the most representative gathering of leading economies from across the world, the Group of 20 (G20), to adopt an action plan for Agenda 2030 in Hangzhou in September 2016, marked an important step in integrating the SDGs into national planning of these economies and, through its newly created Development Working Group, focusing especially on provisions for development financing.²⁸ More concise targets and a timeline for meeting G20 commitments to operationalize the SDGs, signalling another shift towards bringing

parity to the development cooperation process, is to be worked out at the G20 summit in Germany in July 2017.

Africa, Agenda 2063 and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

In the meantime, the African Union Commission working in conjunction with the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) Secretariat and the UN Economic Commission for Africa embarked on a long-term study of future scenarios for continental development. The decision to conduct a far-reaching assessment of African development grew out of discussions held at the AU Summit in May 2013, which sought to commemorate 50 years since the founding of the organization in 1963, and to consider the development prospects for the coming 50 years. The outcome of the study, branded as 'Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want', contained seven aspirations and 20 goals within which were embedded a further 34 priorities.²⁹ These were formulated to fit within the mandate of developing 'a shared strategic framework for inclusive growth and sustainable development and a global strategy to optimize the use of Africa's resources for the benefit of all Africans and in terms of the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration.'³⁰ In the interests of brevity, the core elements of Agenda 2063 are reproduced in Box 2 below: the seven aspirations and 20 goals.

Box 2: Agenda 2063

The Africa we want – the seven aspirations:

1. A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
2. An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance
3. An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
4. A peaceful and secure Africa
5. An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics
6. An Africa where development is people-driven, unleashing the potential of its women and youth
7. Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner

Toward continental unity:

The political unity of Africa will be the culmination of the integration process, including the free movement of people, the establishment of continental institutions and full economic integration. By 2030, there shall be consensus on the form of the continental government and institutions.

We hereby adopt Agenda 2063 as a collective vision and roadmap for the next fifty years and therefore commit to speed up actions in the following areas:

- a. Eradicate poverty in a generation by 2025
- b. Catalyse and education and skills revolution and actively promote science, technology, research and innovation
- c. Transform, grow and industrialize our economies through beneficiation and value-addition of natural resources
- d. Consolidate the modernization of African agriculture and agro-business
- e. Address climate change and preserve the environment
- f. Connect Africa through world-class infrastructure
- g. Fast-track the establishment of a Continental Free Trade Area
- h. Support young people as drivers of Africa's renaissance

- i. Silence the guns by 2020
- j. Achieve gender parity by 2020 in public and private institutions
- k. Introduce an African passport
- l. Consolidate a democratic and people-centred Africa
- m. Enhance Africa's united voice in global negotiations
- n. Strengthen domestic resource mobilization

Critical enablers of Africa's transformation

- I. The people's ownership and mobilization
- II. African resources to finance its development
- III. Accountable leadership and responsible institutions
- IV. Capable and democratic developmental states and institutions
- V. Changed attitudes and mindsets
- VI. A Pan African perspective
- VII. Ownership of the African narrative and brand
- VIII. African approach to development and transformation

Source: African Union. 'Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want'. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: African Union Commission, 2014.

Building upon these overarching 20 goals, African officials met in early 2014 and established 12 key agenda 'flagship' programmes, including an integrated high-speed train network; pan-African e-university; commodities; an annual African forum (to assess achievements towards Agenda 2063); continental free trade area by 2017; the creation of African passports and free movement of peoples; silencing guns by 2020; Grand Inga Dam project; pan-African e-network; promotion of an African role in outer space; promotion of a single African airspace; and the establishment of continental financial institutions.³¹ These concrete programmes culminated in the promulgation of a 'Common African Position' on the post-2015 Development Agenda, which sought to integrate the key aspects of Agenda 2063 into this process and give voice to continental concerns.³²

All of this occurred against the backdrop of growing assertiveness by Africans over the development process and more generally in the area of global affairs. After decades of relative passivity or limited involvement in its own development, Africans had begun to produce cogent critiques of ODA as it had been administered by Western donors and argue for a more inclusive process that gave prominence to African sensibilities of the needs and interests of the continent.³³ As a consequence, as the international community opened up the topic of a follow-up to the MDGs, there were worries within African circles that universalizing the Post-2015 Development Agenda would impact negatively on African development. Notably, there was a persistent belief held by some African governments that the movement from the MDGs to sustainable development-orientation would compromise the interests of the continent but also global issues like climate change. The result was a conscious effort by Africans to mobilize their collective political voice to ensure their views were prevalent in the build up to the Post-2015 Development Agenda. They built upon the experience of African governments mobilizing in 2012 at the Rio+20 Summit, when they successfully devised a 'Consensus Statement' that exercised influence over the Post-2015 Development Agenda process.³⁴ A 'Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda', adopted in 2014 by the African Union, provided the basis for harmonizing the two development programmes. Its proponents within the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa to the UN were clear on the proximity between Agenda 2063 and the SDGs.

Indeed, there is synergy between the SDGs and Africa's ambitious Agenda 2063 and its first Ten-Year Implementation Plan. The SDGs align almost perfectly with the vast majority of the goals of the Ten-Year Implementation Plan, and a detailed look at their respective targets illustrates the strong commonality between the agendas.³⁵

Agenda 2063 sought to reflect a common all-African position, which took into account the perspective of the continent's least developed countries as well as its middle-income countries and their specific conditions in formulating its programme. In this respect, the universality that underwrote the Agenda 2030 process offered both categories of economies a development future.

Yet a close assessment of the two approaches reveals that there are differences, if not exactly in content, certainly in tone between Agenda 2063 and SDGs. The very subtitle of Agenda 2063 – 'The Africa We Want' – is clearly meant to both echo Rio+20's conference subtitle – 'The World We Want' – and at the same time assert the particular concerns and interests of the continent within that global agenda. Detailed discussions of the productive sector feature in Agenda 2063 at various points, as does a declared desire for continental autonomy over institutions, with relatively greater emphasis on social dimensions of development and less on any form of nationalism or identity politics, as is apparent in SDGs. According to Alessandra Casazza, UNDP programme advisor on SDGs, the two agendas 'converge on social development (people), inclusive economic development (prosperity), on peaceful and conclusive societies and responsive institutions (peace), and on a number of environmental sustainability issues (planet).'³⁶ She goes on to identify areas of divergence, which include the focus of the SDGs on 'inequality within and between countries, issues related to the sustainable management of terrestrial ecosystems, forests, desertification, land degradation and biodiversity' as well as sustainable consumption and production, all of which are not part of Agenda 2063.³⁷ Seung Jin Baek, UNECA, echoes these observations, saying that 67 percent of SDGs' targets and 79 percent of Agenda 2063's targets match.³⁸ He suggests SDG 2, SDG 5 and SDG 7 all have 100 percent overlap, while SDG 16 has a strong 90 percent overlap (see Table 3).³⁹ Moreover, recognizing this situation could produce confusion, the AU Commission and UNECA are called to develop 'a core set of regional indicators that all RECs and AU member states will be required to report on.'⁴⁰ Therefore, in summation, it is possible and relevant to speak of SDGs and Agenda 2063 as largely convergent in terms of development aims for Africa.

At the same time, one of the most important operational components of Agenda 2063 that chimed directly with SDG 17 was the recognition that global partnerships would be needed to achieve its development ambitions.

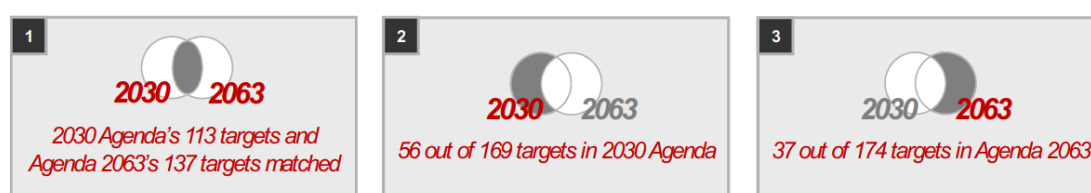
'The universal nature of the agenda will provide an opportunity for engagement and a *new type of partnership* [italics added] to address the global challenges. In particular, Africa can take advantage of this universality of the 2030 Agenda to create partnerships across the goals and ensure effective implementation. Unlike the MDGs, the new agenda is applicable to all countries, developing and developed-rich and poor.'⁴¹

Mobilizing domestic resources in the service of core projects as a concrete way of enhancing sustainable development is a key task identified by Agenda 2063 and to achieve it, Africa would need to leverage its external partners' financial resources.⁴² Furthermore, recognizing that a 50-year time-span risked detaching the process from changing realities on the ground, the African Union consolidated the programme into a series of ten-year incremental plans. The first of the five successive ten-year plans prioritizes sustainable development and is widely seen by development experts to cohere with the SDG's and has become the focus of attention in the immediate term.⁴³

Table 3: Dual Transition of Africa’s Development Agendas

There is significant convergence of both agendas: 67 per cent of 2030 Agenda’s targets and 79 per cent of Agenda 2063’s targets are matched.

Areas of Highest Overlap			Areas of Low Overlap		
SDG	% matching	Goal Description	SDG	% matching	Goal Description
Goal 2	100	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	Goal 14	29	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 5	100	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Goal 15	30	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems...
Goal 7	100	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Goal 13	33	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Goal 16	90	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development...	Goal 10	43	Reduce inequality among and within countries



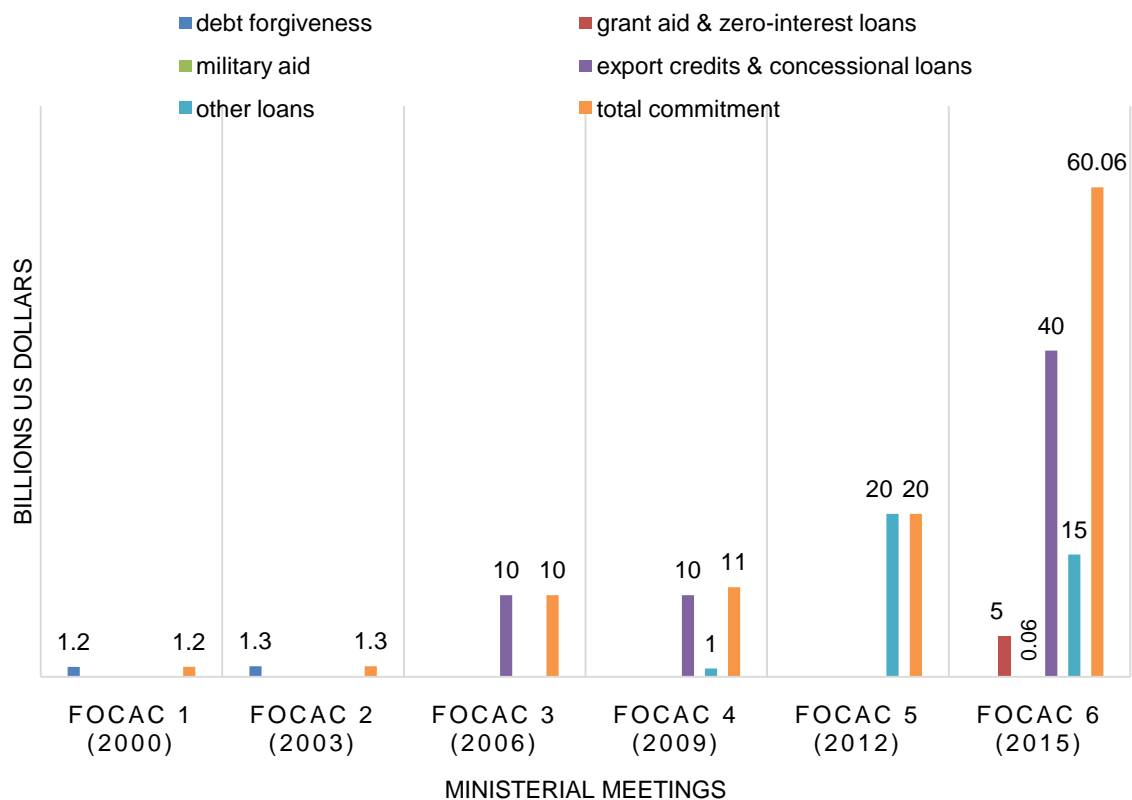
Source: Baek, Seung-Jin, 'Rethinking development assistance in line with Dual transition of Africa's development agendas', in Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue Forum: Oxfam International Africa-China Dialogue Platform, 2016.

2 CHINA'S ENGAGEMENT IN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

To understand China's contemporary role in African development in the context of the post-2015 Development Agenda, it is necessary to conduct a short survey of the key strategies, sectors and actors involved in this two-way relationship.

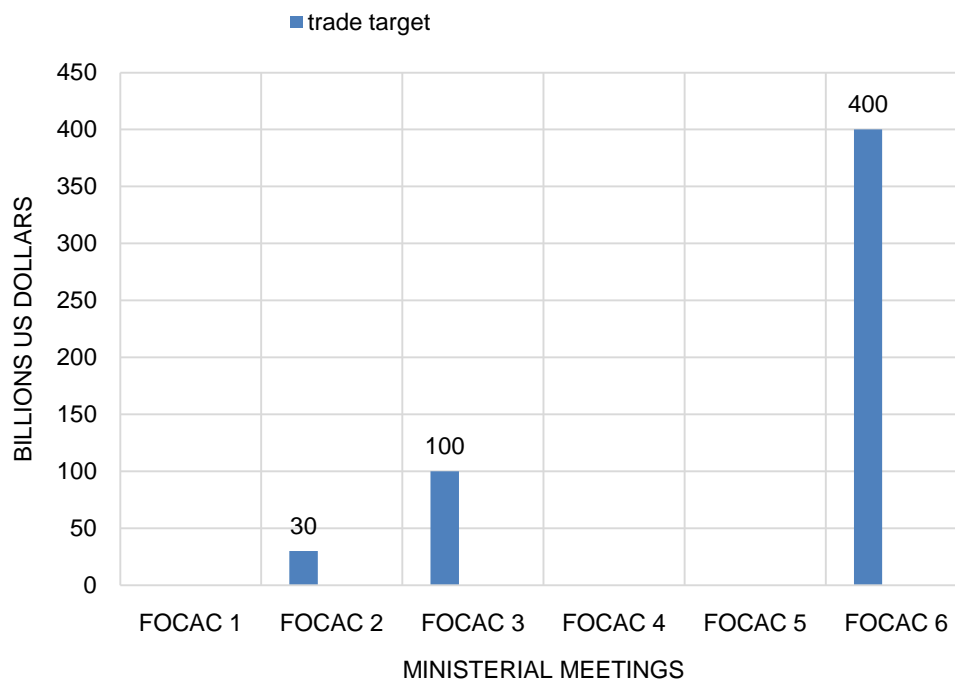
In brief, China's engagement in African development is manifested through its burgeoning economic interests in the resource sector and, to a lesser extent, the African market, framed under the rubric of South–South Development Cooperation. China–Africa two-way trade leapt from just over \$10 billion in 2000 to \$215 billion, while Chinese FDI stock grew from \$500 million to \$32 billion between 2003 to 2014.⁴⁴ As the expansion of Chinese economic interests in Africa (and the concurrent rise of its globalizing economy) occurred during the epoch of the MDGs (2000-2015), it was only in the latter part of the MDG cycle that we see Beijing's active involvement with the continent reconceptualized as an important provider of economic cooperation and aid. The phenomenal rise of emerging powers and the global financial crisis of 2008, both of which gave greater prominence to the role of China and other 'non-traditional' partners, are behind this new attention. A flurry of efforts by Western (or 'traditional' donors) to encourage integration of practices by China followed, much of it with limited impact.⁴⁵

Figure 1: China Pledges at FOCAC



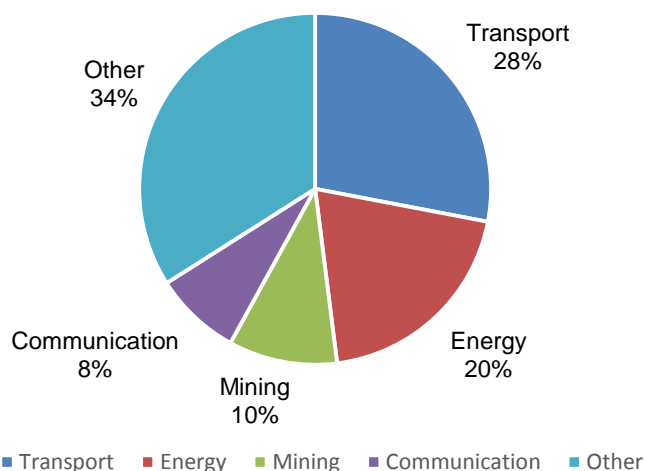
Source: Author's compilation from FOCAC declarations and action plans.

Figure 2: Pledged targets for China–Africa trade



Source: Author’s compilation from FOCAC declarations and action plans.

Figure 3: Sectors receiving Chinese loans



Source: Hwang, Jyhjong, Deborah Brautigam, and Janet Eom. ‘How Chinese Money Is Transforming Africa: It’s Not What You Think’. China-Africa Research Initiative Policy Brief No. 11 (2016).

At the same time, the specifics of Chinese engagement with African development are played out through the multilateral Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and directly through bilateral relations. The FOCAC process – described in detail below – is the principal mechanism for articulating the strategic vision of China-Africa relations and the setting for aggregating the interests and policies that guide two-way ties between China and the continent. Bilateral relations are, nevertheless, the primary site of action and implementation for China, though Beijing’s support for regional and sub-regional organizations since 2012, for example, the AU in peace and security and the regional infrastructure development in East African Community, is a relatively new dimension.

Finally, Chinese state, sub-national (provinces and municipalities), state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and private actors are ultimately the implementing agents for China's programmes and policies towards the continent. Within the government, the State Council plays a key role, with the National Development Reform Commission providing policy guidance and the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission's regulatory oversight of SOEs. The important ministries are the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Defence. SOEs, provincial enterprises and private companies, the latter ranging from large multinationals to small and medium enterprises, act as implementing agents.⁴⁶ Their conduct varies considerably and has on occasion brought criticism of negative impacts on labour relations, environment and local communities.⁴⁷ Beijing has sought to mitigate this by encouraging corporate social responsibility measures and even regulatory reforms of some public and private firms. Finally, the Communist Party of China (CPC) takes the leading role in setting policy for the country and, through party-to-party contacts across Africa, engaging with counterparts.

China, the post-2015 development agenda and Africa

Acquiring a better understanding of the Chinese position on the Post-2015 Agenda Development is crucial to determining what its priorities and policies are with respect to these development aspirations, the instruments and focus that will feature in China's approach to African development. The Chinese government has played an important and active role in shaping the Post-2015 Development Agenda, recognizing that its own national aspirations are deeply intertwined with those of the global community. Speaking in September 2015, the UN's special advisor on Post-2015 Development Planning, Amina Mohammed, underscored the significance of China to the process:

'Emerging countries have an important role to play so that the SDGs can be achieved. There has already been a big change in China compared to five years ago. It is likely that next year it will already include the 17 goals in its national plan.'⁴⁸

A closer examination of China's official 'Position Paper on the Implementation of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development' launched in April 2016 is instructive in illustrating the strategic role the government accords to the process, the degree to which it has integrated the SDGs into its own national development plan and the support it plans to provide to other developing regions like Africa. First, it sees Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development as a signature initiative whose import in structuring national and global policy responses to the challenges facing itself and the world at large.⁴⁹ At the same time, as evidenced from its 'Position Paper', Beijing is cautious to ensure that key pillars of its foreign and economic policy principles such as sovereignty and non-interference remain intact and are not infringed by agreement.⁵⁰ Even the language employed in endorsing 'special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries', drawing from the Doha process and climate change debates, remains important as a point of departure for Beijing in its approach to SDGs. Moreover, China's willingness to be one of the first countries to undergo a voluntary national review of its commitment to meet the SDG targets is a clear process.⁵¹ Finally, its commitment to extending indicator of how seriously the government regards this support to other lesser developed countries in their efforts to reach the sustainable development goals features in a number of its own SDG targets, which indicates a recognition of China's capacity to serve as a source of development partnership for the Global South. Significantly, there is specific mention of how China can use its leadership position in forums such as the G20 to further African development, declaring that it has 'set a new G20 agenda issue called industrialization of Africa and other least developed countries, and urges G20 to actively respond to demands of developing countries, especially African countries' (see below).⁵² Overall, the perception conveyed through its official response to SDGs is that Beijing sees itself as an economic giant in the global system with resources and capabilities to play a leadership role, at the same time that it is itself a developing country focused on reaching middle-income status within a generation and,

concurrently, a leader of the Global South, with a specific role in promoting African development interests.

In this latter context, the Chinese position on the SDGs is relevant to its application and impact on its cooperative partnership with Africa. As expected, the overwhelming focus of Beijing is naturally on the Chinese domestic development agenda and the means available to achieve the stated goals of sustainable development.⁵³

Turning to China's role as a provider of support for other less developed countries seeking to realize the aims contained within the SDGs framework, there are a number of explicit commitments made by Beijing in this regard. For instance, there are provisions aimed at furthering education through the granting of 150,000 scholarships and 120,000 training courses for students from developing countries, including Africa. The setting up and implementation of China's Assistance Fund for South–South Cooperation, its financial support (\$1 billion over ten years) of the UN Fund for Peace and Development, its key status in backing the BRICS New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) as well as the support given to the Silk Road Fund. African countries are singled out for special attention in China's position paper on Agenda 2030, while OECD-DAC countries are admonished to fulfil their ODA obligations, a situation that is replicated at subsequent summits and ministerial meetings by UN members and through other configurations like the G20 (see below).⁵⁴

Follow-up meetings in Africa on Agenda 2030 and matters related to development were opportunities to reaffirm and expand upon the nature of China's support for African countries. At a ministerial conference on Financing for Development convened in July 2015, which produced the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and was convened to detail the framework and content for future financing of Agenda 2030, Beijing again reiterated its commitment to development funding for Africa.⁵⁵ Placing domestic resource mobilization at the centre of the strategy, the Addis Ababa Action Plan committed 193 countries to expanding their revenue base for public investment, alongside measure to combat tax evasion and further extend their support for ODA and South-South Development Cooperation as well as creating the Global Infrastructure Forum and support for financing green technologies through a Technology Facilitation Mechanism.⁵⁶ The G77 plus China grouping, while enthusiastic about the formalization of a Global Partnership (SDG 17) and supportive of these initiatives, was nonetheless critical of the failure to take stronger action on tax havens and related matters.⁵⁷ Chinese government officials reiterated their support for developing countries in terms which highlighted their commitment as an expression of South–South solidarity.

'China stands ready to assist all developing nations for the mutual benefit of a new world economic order ... (i)t is therefore important that we reinforce solidarity among the developing countries by building on the current momentum of economic growth in the developing nations.'⁵⁸

In a somewhat different context, the Chinese position on development assistance more generally and as it relates to Africa is illustrative. China's involvement as an observer to the China-DAC Study Group since 2009 has allowed for learning about development assistance between the Chinese and the rest of the OECD-DAC membership (while still maintaining Beijing's status as a developing country outside the 'rich developed world club'). A particular focus of the interaction with OECD-DAC is on how China's development experiences can be translated into policy prescriptions in the African context. This emphasis has resulted in a policy symposium in Beijing in June 2011 and the accompanying publication of a two-volume report entitled 'Economic Transformation and Poverty Reduction: how it happened in China, helping it happen in Africa'.⁵⁹

The report lays out in detail the key policy frameworks, enabling conditions and drivers which gave impetus to over three decades of high growth and development in China, as well as identifying how these might be harnessed to the task of African development. The International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC) which led this ground-breaking research also conducted a number of sector-specific studies of the transferability of lessons from China to the African context, which have been influential in shaping Chinese thinking on its role in promoting African development.⁶⁰

Finally, in keeping with its stated commitments to support SDGs and African development in a global setting, China used its recent role as chair of the G20 summit meeting in Hangzhou to promote both of these within this gathering of the world's leading economies. As chair of the summit, the Chinese government called upon G20 countries to integrate the SDGs as China had done into their national plans with greater specificity.⁶¹ Furthermore, Chinese officials chastise OECD-DAC countries for not meeting their ODA commitments, pointing to the limited follow through by traditional donors in operationalizing the decision to provide 0.7 percent of GDP annually for development assistance.⁶²

In fact, rising domestic tensions within the few OECD-DAC countries like Britain that actually meet the 0.7 percent target over the high costs and perceived 'divergence' of economic assistance that could be used to address problems at home are, however, beginning to pressure politicians to revisit this commitment.⁶³ In addition, Beijing put forward its contribution to enhance the capacity of the international financial system to move toward a 'green approach' which conforms to the long-term needs of sustainable development.⁶⁴ The G20 Green Finance Study Group, in conjunction with the People's Bank of China, sought to elaborate on this approach, as well as to improve upon the transparency of China's own 'green bonds' for environmentally oriented project finance.⁶⁵

China and Africa – the FOCAC process, FOCAC VI Summit and the Johannesburg Action Plan

The FOCAC process is a triennial ministerial meeting (though on two occasions elevated to summit status) between Chinese and African officials launched in Beijing in 2000. Significantly, the convening of the meeting goes beyond the conventions of diplomatic pageantry and includes parallel initiatives such as the FOCAC Business Forum and the Academic Forum meetings. While early FOCAC meetings tended to focus on setting targets for expanding trade, some modest commitments to provide financial support through loans and grants, as well as a requisite shared position on global affairs, from 2006 onwards these events have become more detailed in their approach.⁶⁶ This reflects, at least in part, a growing awareness among African governments of the need to play a proactive role in engaging with what was set to become the world's second most powerful economy, Africa's largest trading partner (since 2010) and an increasingly important source of financing for development for the continent.

In the build-up to the sixth FOCAC ministerial meeting (later designated to be a summit) in South Africa in 2015, the Chinese government began a series of visits to Africa and made accompanying announcements which presaged their positions on the future role that they expected to play in Africa.⁶⁷ Premier Li Keqiang, on a state visit in May 2014 that took him to Ethiopia, Nigeria, Angola and Kenya, launched two initiatives – the '461 China-Africa Cooperation Framework' and the 'Three Networks and Industrialization Projects'. Events like the China-Africa Poverty Reduction and Development Conference, involving leading figures in Chinese development along with AU counterparts and held in Addis Ababa in November 2014, aimed to provide further insights into the industrialization experiences of China and its possible transfer to the continent.⁶⁸ Noted academics and policy practitioners, led by Justin Yifu Lin (former deputy head of the World Bank) and Wang Yan (a senior economist at the World Bank), produced work on 'new structural economics' which offered a theoretical reassessment of the development opportunities inherent in relationships like that between China and Africa.⁶⁹

Moving to the particulars of proposals put forward by Beijing, the '461 China-Africa Cooperation Framework' was a short-hand description of a new policy framework based on four principles (equality and mutual respect, solidarity, inclusive development, innovation on practical cooperation), six projects (industrial cooperation, financial cooperation, poverty reduction projects, ecological/environment protection projects, cultural and people-to-people exchanges, peace and security) and one platform (FOCAC).⁷⁰ The 'Three Networks and Industrialization Projects' included provisions for the construction of high-speed railroad networks, the building of road transportation networks and the expansion of airports and aviation networks. Three projects in particular, the Addis Ababa Light Rail System, the Addis Ababa to Djibouti standard gauge railway and the Mombasa to Nairobi standard gauge railway, were seen as emblematic of this approach. The first two projects have been successfully completed while the Mombasa to Nairobi railway is still undergoing construction.⁷¹ Moreover, they cohered closely with one of the key 'flagship' programmes, namely the 'world class infrastructure criss-crossing Africa' identified by AU officials as part of Agenda 2063's first phase. Taken together, these initiatives represented the Chinese vision of a 'new deal' with Africa, one which sought to intensify economic ties around a series of capstone infrastructure and industrialization projects which would involve Chinese firms in collaboration with Africans and underwritten by Chinese finance.

At the same time, South African officials, as hosts of the FOCAC VI Summit, worked together with their Chinese counterparts in early 2015 to lay out the key themes for the event. These included (i) peace and security; (ii) industrial development (beneficiation); (iii) infrastructure regional expansion; (iv) agricultural development; (v) and health services.⁷² Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, following a series of meetings between ANC officials and their counterparts in Beijing, spoke at the China-Africa Business Forum in July 2015 about South Africa's own expectations for the relationship. He indicated that China would further expand its existing investment into employment-generating manufacturing and beneficiation in the mining sector in South Africa. Furthermore, he hoped that Chinese plans to build infrastructure in East Africa and elsewhere 'will materialize or expand during the 6th FOCAC meeting and that South African companies will have the opportunity to partner with Chinese companies on the delivery of these projects'.⁷³

Negotiations continued over the course of the build-up to the summit and were cemented at the event itself, which for the first time included the African Union as a full member and planned to declare the FOCAC process to be re-designated as a 'comprehensive and strategic partner' by Beijing.⁷⁴ A close reading of the FOCAC VI Action Plan highlights in great detail the implications of achieving this status, including regular bilateral meetings at national, sub-national and local government levels to coordinate policy initiatives, as well as other areas such as strengthening of party-to-party links.⁷⁵

At the summit itself, held in Johannesburg on 4-5 December 2015, President Xi Jinping announced the content of the jointly agreed framework for cooperation as '10+5+1':

- Ten cooperative plans focused on industrialization, agricultural modernization, infrastructure finance, green development, trade and investment, poverty reduction, public health, cultural people-to-people exchanges and, lastly, peace and security.
- Five pillars highlighting the nature of the relationship, namely, political equality and mutual trust, win-win economic cooperation, mutual learning between Chinese and African civilisation, mutual assistance in security, and solidarity and coordination in international affairs.
- One being the comprehensive and strategic cooperative partnership between China and Africa at the core of the relationship.⁷⁶

Moreover, in a headline-grabbing statement, the Chinese president declared that China would make available \$60 billion in financial resources to realize these ambitions over the next few

years.⁷⁷ Breaking this down, this pledge consisted of \$5 billion in grants and interest-free loans, \$35 billion in export credits and concessional loans, \$5 billion to the China-Africa Development Fund, \$5 billion to the China Development Bank's African Development Special SME Loans facility and, finally, \$10 billion to a new China-Africa Industrial Cooperation Fund. This followed the pattern of doubling financial commitments (\$5 billion FOCAC III in 2006, \$10 billion FOCAC IV in 2009, \$12 billion FOCAC V in 2012) made by Beijing to support African development.⁷⁸

The blueprint for implementation of the ambitious announcements made at FOCAC VI, as with all FOCAC meetings, was the FOCAC Action Plan. The FOCAC Action Plan, unveiled a week later, reiterated the '10+5+1' formulation as the basis for cooperation over the coming three years while providing much more specific detail as to how China and Africa would strengthen the institution basis and planning process of cooperation, discussions of implementation and some insights into the commitments.⁷⁹ In July 2016, the African Union and Chinese government officials came together in the first of the follow-up meetings to FOCAC VI, indicating that some of the projects in South Africa were already coming into fruition.⁸⁰

FOCAC's significance resides primarily in its status as the premier diplomatic setting for China and the African continent to engage in a full range of activities that reflect their shared aspirations for the relationship and, through the attendant sideline forums, avenues to negotiate and pursue cooperative strategies in a variety of areas. Understanding how the FOCAC process is aligned to SDGs and Agenda 2063, and, concurrently, the commitment manifested by its respective parties to implement these two agendas, is therefore critical to determining its impact on furthering sustainable development in Africa. These issues are explored in detail in the next section of this report.



Delegates from Chinese Mission to the African Union

3 UNPACKING CHINA'S 'NEW DEAL WITH AFRICA' AS SEEN THROUGH KEY SDG TARGETS AND AGENDA 2063 TARGETS

FOCAC VI's Action Plan, as indicated above, constitutes for many observers and participants a 'new deal for Africa'.⁸¹ The initiatives described at the FOCAC Summit and in the formally accepted declarations for implementation offer an unprecedented opportunity to realize key features of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. At the same time, a closer reading of the FOCAC Action Plan, when coupled with preliminary assessments of the achievements as measured by the indicators, suggests some areas of divergence alongside this picture. Additionally, it is instructive to consider the differences between Chinese government positions on the SDGs and domestic development when compared to the positions adopted by Beijing towards fostering African development. In order to assess these prospects, particular focus will be given over to the SDGs targets, which were established to go beyond the generalized platitudes of the 17 SDGs and bring specificities to the analysis of the discussions of convergence with FOCAC VI aims.

Assessing the synergies between the SDGs, Agenda 2063 and FOCAC VI

Much ink has already been spilled determining the degree of difference and similarity between the SDGs/Agenda 2030 and Africa's Agenda 2063.⁸² This report will not delve into the particulars of that debate beyond what is laid out in the previous section but rather, it will reflect upon the findings by experts and, in that context, assess the fit with FOCAC's Agenda for Action declared in Johannesburg in later 2015. Analysing the content and significance of the FOCAC VI demonstrates the synergies between it and the SDGs and Agenda 2063, while highlighting a number of distinctive features that set them apart.

First, it is clear from the outset that the *point of departure for FOCAC VI is Agenda 2063*, which features in the preamble of declaration and reappears indirectly with reference to key programmes and initiatives associated with it such as the acknowledgement of the flagship infrastructure programme (FOCAC VI 3.31) and the promotion of culture (FOCAC VI 5):

'2.4.3 China appreciates the adoption of Agenda 2063 and its First 10-Year Implementation Plan by the African Union, and will continue to support the African Union in its efforts to build a united, integrated and prosperous Africa that is at peace with itself and the world.'⁸³

At the same time, the FOCAC VI Action Plan speaks directly to several of the key components identified in the SDGs and Agenda 2063. It should be noted that, while the FOCAC VI Action Plan explicitly mentions the SDGs and Agenda 2063 once each, it does *not* mention the SDGs, though as outlined above, there is considerable overlap between the SDGs and Agenda 2063. Nevertheless, with respect to objectives outlined in the SDGs, it is the economic component that gets the most attention in FOCAC VI declaration, though under the generalized rubric of 'poverty alleviation' and the more specific commitment to the 'health' sector speaks to the social component of the SDGs.

Secondly, if one compares the statements made by Chinese officials in the build-up to FOCAC, '4-6-1' and 'Three Networks' in particular, one can see how negotiations with African officials result in a broadening of the FOCAC agenda to bring it more into line with the aspirations captured in Agenda 2063 and, through that, Agenda 2030. The FOCAC Action Plan, however, provides a much more detailed set of specific targets and operational plans for implementation:

- Economic Cooperation: agriculture, industrialization, infrastructure development, energy and natural resources, ocean economy, tourism, investment and economic cooperation; (SDGs 2, 7–9, 14)
- Social Development Cooperation: humanitarian assistance, medical and healthcare, education and human resources, exchanges experiences of poverty eradication strategies, science and technology cooperation and knowledge sharing, environmental protection and tackling climate change; (SDGs 3, 4, 6, 13,15)
- Security Cooperation: military, police and anti-terrorism, consular, judiciary, immigration and law enforcement. (SDGs 16)

Additional components of the FOCAC Action Plan, with a more tangential link to the SDGs, include cultural exchanges, media and commitments to international solidarity, as well as provisions on structuring closer political ties (more on the latter below). Notably, there are only two mentions of SDG 5 in the FOCAC Action Plan that directly promote women and gender equality (FOCAC 4.4.5 and 5.4.6). This would fit with the declared and more focused approach on what are characterized as productive sectors of development cooperation contained within FOCAC, as well as, to a degree, within Agenda 2063 and less explicitly so in the SDGs.

That being said, certainly the content of the FOCAC Action Plan, when coupled to the announcements made by President Xi Jinping at the Summit, suggest that there is an effort to address in some manner nearly every aspect of the SDGs. As noted above, this is arguably the case because of the existing parallels between the SDGs and Agenda 2063. This symmetry is reflected at a minimum through the organizing of a small set of projects that would nominally – if not especially in terms of their content and impact – be aimed at checking the box on all the SDGs.

Finally, the obvious synergies and centrality of SDG 17 to the FOCAC approach deserves specific consideration. There is clear recognition that in order to achieve the ambitious sustainable development goals of Agenda 2030 and the objectives outlined in Agenda 2063, it would require substantial inputs and assistance from the developed and other developing countries as well as international institutions and the private sector. FOCAC's partnership is of course situated around the relationship between China, African countries and the African regional institutions (most recently including the African Union). The FOCAC IV Action Plan outlines their collective view of the contemporary situation:

‘At present, international relations and the global landscape are undergoing and will continue to undergo profound and complex changes, including in terms of globalization and the spread of information. It serves the common interests of China and Africa to strengthen international coordination and to establish a new model of global development that is based on equality, accountability, mutual respect and that is more balanced, stable, inclusive and harmonious.’⁸⁴

Though framed as an expression of South–South Development Cooperation, a term with a very broad basis for application, the detailed descriptions under point two, ‘Political Cooperation’, and point three ‘Economic Cooperation’ of the FOCAC’s Johannesburg Action Plan makes no mention of fostering relations with other global partners beyond a fairly detailed description of how ties between China and African states, regional, local governments and political parties are to be strengthened or the particulars of joint development projects proposed such as support for industrial parks and agricultural cooperation.⁸⁵ Mention is made of ongoing programmes (the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa) and relationships (with, for example, the Food and Agriculture Organisation), so it can be inferred that these will be carried out in conjunction with the other global partners who are already involved in these programmes and activities. Direct reference is made to the Assistance Fund for South–South Cooperation established by China (though not specific to African countries), which is presented in FOCAC documents as having been created ‘to support African countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’, a programme open to other non-African developing

countries, and to the China-Brazil Resource Satellite, another concrete expression of South–South Development Cooperation.⁸⁶ The closest the declaration comes to invoking global partnerships as an integral feature of the FOCAC process is when it references existing international programmes associated with global partnerships or when it states in general terms:

3.7.7 The two sides will cooperate with international financial institutions and support the holding of Investing in Africa Forum and the establishment of Investing in Africa Think Tank Union, to share China's development experience, promote investment cooperation in Africa, and realize common development.⁸⁷

In short, FOCAC presents itself as a cooperative development partnership that is first and foremost between China and the African continent. This caveat may explain the relative absence of external partnerships, with the exception of the UN agencies in a few cases, in the document.

It is interesting to consider the view of Chinese scholars on the relationship between FOCAC and Agenda 2030. According to Zhang Chun and Gao Wei, Chinese cooperation with Africa already has a decade and a half of experience aligning its approach to that of the MDGs. As a result, they believe that the FOCAC process, unlike other bilateral and multilateral efforts, is uniquely positioned to work within the Agenda 2030 framework.

'It's important to note that the China-Africa cooperation is possibly an exception (to other bilateral and multilateral forms of cooperative partnerships with the continent) because of its experience in gearing the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into the FOCAC process that laid a solid foundation for future implementation of the post-2015 agenda. Created in the year 2000, FOCAC is a collective dialogue platform between China and the African continent; its action plans covered almost all goals and indicators of the MDGs, including but not limited to poverty reduction, human resources, health care, food security, etc.'⁸⁸

This assessment, it must be noted, does not always bear up under close analysis on two fronts. First, there is overwhelming evidence that major efforts were made by traditional donors – held to account by their own civil societies as well as by African partners – to align their aid programmes with the MDGs.⁸⁹ In fact, the critique that Western governments were too focused on social dimensions of the development assistance agenda voiced by emerging powers in Africa springs in part from this programmatic integration of the MDGs into their aid deliverables in Africa to the neglect of so-called 'hard infrastructure' (transport, communications, port facilities, etc.). It was precisely the appeal of Chinese development cooperation, with its focus on financing major infrastructure projects largely neglected by traditional donors and their private sector interests that captured the attention of African policy makers during this phase. Retrospectively, critiques of the excessive focus on poverty alleviation within Western development circles can be better understood as a comment on the MDGs themselves and their orientation, arguably reflecting the relative power distribution of the donors in relations to Africa in the late 1990s (when the MDGs were conceived).

Secondly, as noted above, the contention that FOCAC was aligned with the MDGs is just not validated by an examination of the earliest FOCAC declarations and accompanying action plans from 2000 to 2006.⁹⁰ Primary attention was given over to targets for expanding two-way trade and nostrums on peace and security, though, from FOCAC III in 2006, a more pointed effort seemed to have been made to expand the agenda in ways that reflected or overlapped with the MDGs.⁹¹

Comparisons, for example, between the FOCAC I declaration and action plan (2000) with FOCAC III declaration and action plan (2006) illustrate how this has changed somewhat over time, with undertakings that cohered with MDGs occupying more of the stated activities pursued

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under the FOCAC heading. For instance, an examination of the FOCAC II Addis Ababa Action Plan of 2003 demonstrates a great deal of attention given over to the UN, with specific references to the Charter, the UN Security Council, the UN General Assembly (especially in the area of peace and security), as well as mention of the World Trade Organization, but despite this, no discussion is made of the MDGs.⁹² But by FOCAC III held in Beijing in 2006, the MDGs were solid references points for China-Africa cooperation:

'4.5 Recognizing the difficulties and challenges Africa faces in achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the two sides called on the international community to work actively to build an international environment conducive to poverty alleviation and common development, effectively implement the agreement reached at the Global Summit marking the 60th anniversary of the United Nations, and further strengthen the role of the United Nations in promoting development. The two sides will promote the establishment of a fair, proper and effective progress evaluation framework of the UN MDGs to oversee and facilitate the delivery of commitments on international cooperation and development. The two sides also called on the World Solidarity Fund for Struggle against Poverty to pay greater attention to the development of Africa and hoped that the international community pay adequate attention to the sustainable development of Small Island and landlocked countries in Africa.'⁹³

It could be argued that FOCAC contributes to 'laying a solid foundation for the future implementation of the post-2015 Agenda' through its role in facilitating Chinese economic cooperation with Africa in infrastructure development linked to growing Chinese demand for African-based resources. These have been necessary components to the rapid growth experienced in African economies during this decade of development on the continent and contributed enormously to the improvements in basic infrastructure, with direct and indirect spill-over effects on revenues, incomes and livelihoods.

Turning to Agenda 2063, proponents in China and Africa see the FOCAC process as broadly supportive of the objectives embodied in the fifty-year programme. South African officials at Brand South Africa, for instance, applauded FOCAC VI for 'contributing to Africa's efforts to achieve Agenda 2063'.⁹⁴ China's Africa Policy document published in 2015, the year of FOCAC VI, acknowledges the importance of Agenda 2063 as a guide for African aspirations for development. Examining FOCAC VI and Agenda 2063, one Kenyan analyst suggests:

'China has its eyes set on Africa's industrialization while Africa has its eyes set on transport infrastructure development – at least based on prioritization in the AU's Agenda 2063 and China's Africa Policy 2015. If the AU is to draw on its Agenda 2063 strategy in developing a policy or engagement strategy towards China, it would perhaps have to negotiate for infrastructure as the starting point with linkages to industrialization, agriculture, trade and investment, human resource development, peace and security, etc.'⁹⁵

Regarding the question of gradual convergence between Chinese and African perspectives on development, there are parallels between the 'Chinese dream' articulated under President Xi Jinping and Agenda 2063's the 'Africa we want', rooted in a discourse of development as modernization. However, it is notable that Zhang and Gao highlight significant *divergences* between the Chinese position and the African position on peace and security matters.

There is a huge gap between China and Africa as a whole in regard to whether to include the peace and security goal in the post-2015 agenda. For China, the international aspect of the peace and security issue is the responsibility of the UN Security Council and other related organs; meanwhile, the domestic aspect should be respected as domestic affairs and follow the non-interference principle. China also agrees with many like-minded countries that a peace and security goal will be very difficult to measure and the post-2015 agenda is about development but not security or governance. Suffering a lot from domestic and regional conflicts, Africa attaches great

importance to peace and security issues, explaining why the African Union asked to revise the CAP (Common African Position) in late 2013 due to the absence of this issue in its first draft.⁹⁶

The ultimate formulation settled upon was 'SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions: promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'.⁹⁷ This reflects the ability of the Africans to lobby effectively through the Common African Position to have their perspective integrated into the final outcome document.

SDG targets in comparison with FOCAC VI aims

As noted above, there are several SDG indicators that directly overlap with FOCAC IV's Action Plan. What follows therefore is an assessment of the synergies between key SDGs (identified by Casazza and Baek as most representative of the convergence between Agenda 2030's SDGs and the objectives outlined by Agenda 2063) and FOCAC IV goals. These have been selected out for more detailed examination from the total number of 17 SDGs because **they will necessarily represent the best possible cases for assessing their degree of representivity within the FOCAC VI Action Plan and possible convergence in terms of implementation.**⁹⁸

SDG 2 Zero Hunger

SDG 2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round.

(FOCAC 4.4.6 The two sides will mobilize resources including non-governmental organizations to implement in Africa 200 'Happy Life' projects and poverty reduction programmes focusing on women and children.)

(FOCAC 4.4.1 The two sides will use the 'Programme for Strengthening Cooperation on Poverty Reduction between the People's Republic of China and the African Union' jointly published in 2014, as a guide to further strengthen experience sharing in poverty eradication and practical cooperation)

(FOCAC 4.4.2 The two-sides agree to continue to jointly organize the China-Africa Poverty Eradication and Development Conference and to endorse it as an official subforum under the framework of FOCAC, in order to explore in-depth poverty eradication strategies and policies, and to gradually establish a multilevel intergovernmental and inter-society dialogue mechanism for poverty eradication.)

(FOCAC 4.4.3 The Chinese side will continue to host the workshop on poverty eradication policies and practice tailored to the needs of African countries, offer educational programmes with degrees on poverty eradication and development for African countries, and help Africa to train specialized personnel in the field of poverty eradication and development.)

(FOCAC 4.4.4 The Chinese side will, in conjunction with African countries, carry out village-community-level small-scale demonstration projects on poverty eradication and cooperate to implement village-community-level comprehensive development projects, help implement satellite TV projects in 10,000 villages in Africa.)

(FOCAC 4.4.5 The Chinese side will work with African countries and relevant institutions to launch joint research projects, offer consultancy services on poverty eradication policies for African countries, and send experts and/or volunteers for technical support.)

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SDG 2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

(FOCAC: 3.1.1 The two sides agree that realizing agriculture modernization in Africa by strengthening China-Africa agricultural cooperation is an important way to contribute to food security in Africa, and should be given priority in the context of China-Africa cooperation projects. The cooperation will enhance agricultural transformation and upgrading, increase agricultural production, processing and income, and safeguard food security in Africa, bearing in mind the prevailing regulatory requirements.)

SDG 2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

(FOCAC 3.1.5. The Chinese side will help African countries develop water conservancy and irrigation projects, implement the project of 'Agriculture Leads to Prosperity' in 100 African villages, provide African countries with emergency food assistance.)

(FOCAC: 3.1.10 The Chinese side will continue to strengthen agricultural cooperation with Africa under the framework of the UNFAO 'Special Programme for Food Security' and explore prospects of working with other institutions and countries to realize further agricultural cooperation with Africa.)

SDG 2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed.

(FOCAC 4.6.3 The two sides will work together to promote the development of the 'China-Africa Joint Research Centre' project and cooperate in biodiversity protection, prevention and treatment of desertification, sustainable forest management and modern agriculture demonstration. The Chinese side will support Africa in implementing 100 clean energy and wild life protection projects, environment friendly agricultural projects and smart city construction projects.)

(FOCAC 4.6.4 The African side highly appreciates that the Chinese government supports Africa in its efforts to protect wildlife resources. The two sides will strengthen cooperation in the area of wildlife protection, help African countries to improve the protection capabilities, build the capacity of environmental rangers, provide African countries with training opportunities on environmental and ecological conservation, explore the possibility of cooperating on wildlife protection demonstration projects and jointly fight against the illegal trade of fauna and flora products, especially addressing endangered species poaching on the African continent, in particular elephants and rhinos.)

SDG 2.a Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries.

(FOCAC 3.1.6 The two sides will actively cooperate in agricultural project designing, financing and management under the framework of the CAADP, as implemented through the AU and NEPAD, and offer support to feasibility studies on agricultural infrastructure construction.)

(FOCAC 3.1.7 The Chinese side will continue to work with African countries to jointly implement high-quality and high-yield agricultural demonstration projects, encourage and guide China's agro-science research organizations and enterprises to work with their African counterparts to carry out experimental demonstrations for high-quality and high-yield agriculture, establish '10+10' cooperative mechanism among China-Africa agro-science research institutions, focus on facilitating joint research on breeding and the production of seeds as well as plant protection, specifically focusing on increasing outputs of grain, cotton and other key crops in African countries.)

(FOCAC 3.1.8 The Chinese side will encourage and support Chinese enterprises to invest in agriculture in Africa; implement cooperation projects focusing on technical support in grain planting, storage, sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, animal husbandry, agro-processing capacity, forestry, and fisheries to create a favourable environment for African countries to realize long-term food security supported by national agricultural production and processing.)

(FOCAC 3.1.11 The African side pledges to cooperate with the Chinese side in key fields such as exchanges on agricultural policies, agricultural infrastructure improvement, development of systems of agricultural support services, modern agricultural development capacity building, and investment in the complete value chain of agriculture to improve Africa's agricultural production and strengthen its capability to ensure food security. It will create an enabling environment for Chinese enterprises to invest and trade in agriculture in Africa, and offer support that includes preferential policies in agriculture, land, agricultural infrastructure, fiscal financing and insurance service, in accordance with local laws.)

SDG 2.b Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round.

(FOCAC 3.1.9 The two sides will encourage the trade of agricultural products, improve trade policies, assess methods to promote agricultural trade and continuously scale up the trade of agricultural products between China and Africa.)

SDG 2.c Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility.

SDG 5 Gender Equality

SDG 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

SDG 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

(FOCAC 6.1.5 The two sides will enhance cooperation in preventing and combating the illegal trafficking of humans, fauna and flora products, marine products, narcotics, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals.)

SDG 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

SDG 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.

(FOCAC 4.4.6 The two sides will mobilize resources including non-governmental organizations to implement in Africa 200 'Happy Life' projects and poverty reduction programmes focusing on women and children.)

SDG 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

(FOCAC 5.4.6 The two sides will continue to strengthen exchanges on gender equality and further deepen practical cooperation on women and gender affairs via dialogues between female leaders, seminars, skills training, human capacity development and cultural exchanges.)

SDG 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences. 5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

(FOCAC 5.4.6 The two sides will continue to strengthen exchanges on gender equality and further deepen practical cooperation on women and gender affairs via dialogues between female leaders, seminars, skills training, human capacity development and cultural exchanges.)

SDG 5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.

SDG 5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

SDG 7 Affordable and Clean Energy

SDG 7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.

(FOCAC 3.4.2 The two sides will enhance African countries' capacity for intensive processing of energy and natural resource products during their cooperation, ensuring increased local employment and value addition of primary products, while protecting the local eco-environment.)

SDG 7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.

(FOCAC 3.4.4 The two sides agree to establish a training programme for the capacitation of African energy practitioners through research and development exchanges.)

SDG 7.b By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing states and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programmes of support.

(FOCAC 3.4.3 The two sides will encourage energy and resources cooperation, support Chinese and African enterprises and financial institutions to conduct mutually beneficial cooperation, in particular encouraging these enterprises to assist the African side with beneficiation technologies through technology transfer and capacity building, thus helping African countries to translate their energy and natural resources potential into real socio-economic development.)

(FOCAC 3.9.1 The Chinese side will offer African countries US\$35 billion of loans of concessional nature on more favourable terms and export credit line, create new financing models, optimize favourable credit terms and conditions, expand credit scales, and support China-Africa industrial capacity cooperation, infrastructure building, and development of energy resources, agriculture and manufacturing in Africa.)

Examining broader implications of China's 'new deal for Africa'

Conducting an assessment of China's 'new deal for Africa' in relation to the SDGs most closely aligned with Agenda 2063 raises all manner of issues that underscore the complications in seeking to pass judgement on alignment, convergence or divergence between them. Matching some of the SDG indicators to the FOCAC VI Action Plan is itself quite difficult, as the latter may be of a general category of support, but it is unclear as to exactly where the resources will be channelled.

For instance, China's 'Assistance Fund for South-South Cooperation to support African countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' is obviously suited to directly address the SDGs, but the only clue is that it has been categorized under the heading 'Social Development Cooperation'. Investigating China's Implementation Plan for Agenda 2030, which also mentions it, provides no further information. There are a number of newly created Chinese financial instruments designed to support developing countries, including the South-South Aid Fund (\$2 billion pledged) and the South-South Cooperation Fund on Climate Change (\$3.1 billion pledged), as well as the establishment of an Academy of South-South Cooperation and Development.⁹⁹ It is likely that the funds mentioned in the FOCAC Action Plan referred to the South-South Aid Fund; if correct there still is no indication of how much in that fund is actually earmarked for Africa, the criteria for its use or any related matters. Even where there are funds with a general figure attached to them, for example, the 'Special Loans to Support Small and Medium Sized Enterprises in Africa' are assigned 'from US\$1 billion to US\$6 billion', the concerns about the process and provisions for financing remain opaque. Equally, given the centrality of financial support to the success of Agenda 2030 – a point recognized by the international community and highlighted at the Addis Ababa Action Agenda – this overarching aim is not especially well accounted for through the above method of comparison.

Three areas in particular merit closer attention and critical analysis to understand exactly how significant Beijing's new deal is for the continental development aspirations. These are (i) the project-based approach to development favoured by the Chinese and its implications; (ii) development financing arrangements and their relationship to achieving the aims contained within SDGs/Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063; and (iii) the social component of development, areas such as women and gender equality, which is largely absent from the FOCAC action plan, and how this impacts upon achieving SDGs/Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063.

Project-led development and its implications

The fundamentally project-based nature of many of the specific initiatives announced at the FOCAC Summit seems to imply that their success should be judged (and methodologically evaluated) in achieving its targets for delivery, rather than necessarily the impact they may have on the overall particular condition that they are tackling. For instance, this declaration on poverty reduction frames the Chinese contribution in the following way:

The Chinese side will, in conjunction with African countries carry out village-community-level small-scale demonstration projects on poverty eradication and cooperate to implement village-community-level comprehensive development projects, help implement Satellite TV projects in 10,000 villages in Africa ... (t)he two sides will mobilize resources including non-governmental organizations to implement in Africa

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200 'Happy Life' projects and poverty reduction programmes focusing on women and children.¹⁰⁰

At the bottom of this preference are a number of issues, including China's historical and institutional approach to its own domestic development; the manner in which it transposes this domestic planning approach to its overseas development cooperation strategy; and lastly how the integration of interests into the South-South Development Cooperation framework results in a strong commercial drive within its approach to African development. The strong emphasis within the Agenda 2030 process, which has invested considerable resources to developing measurable indicators for the SDGs, refining and building the capacity of African governments (and other developing countries) to collect and analysis development data, signals the importance of monitoring and evaluating progress. There are numerous post-2015 analyses which point to the necessity of firming up the national statistical systems, the harmonizing of data and indicators, as well as improving assessments of mid-term impact of MDGs.¹⁰¹

FOCAC VI's approach remains largely outside of this process, which absents the impact of its activities from scientific assessment of its influence on meeting the stated sustainable development goals. The commitments made at the Busan Summit in late 2011 to support the building of national statistical systems that would improve national capacities to gather and process data on development as well as better align national and international indices on development and addressing conflicting data sources are a major initiative that could strengthen and improve the work of global partnership in development. While, as noted above, it may be that for historical reasons development as exported from China to Africa is measured by output and completion of projects, the universality of the SDGs and China's own integration into the country's national planning warrants a rethink that would include reforms of methodologies and promoting efficiency. In the interests of gaining these vital efficiencies in the distribution of development assistance, African governments would do well to engage with China to encourage that greater focus is given over to assessing the impact and sustainability of its development assistance.

Development financing under the spotlight

Another crucial consideration when assessing the FOCAC Action Plan is whether the instruments created for realizing the declared shared aims for African development are sufficient to meet these objectives. China's financial provisions directed towards African development, with over half being designated as concessional loans and export credits (including a special fund for SMEs), strongly suggest that the primary goal of this tranche of \$40 billion is a combination of funding support for projects which (if past practice remains in place) are tied to the use of Chinese production factors (firms, supplies, labour, to varying degrees, as negotiated by host government) primarily for infrastructure projects, while the export credits are intended to enhance the expansion of Chinese commercial interests on the continent.

Between 2000 and 2014, for instance, China extended \$86 billion of loans to African governments and its state owned enterprises, with China Exim Bank providing over half of this financing with some ending up as part of syndicated loans.¹⁰² The financing of improvements to Africa's recognized infrastructure backlog has had positive direct and indirect employment creation impacts on host communities, beyond the contribution to actual infrastructure through their particular projects. The twin modalities of Private-Public-Partnerships (PPP) and Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT), identified in the FOCAC Action Plan and utilized over the past few years in delivering some hydro-energy projects and the Agricultural Technical Demonstration Centres is another way that this financial support is turned into discernible contributions to sector development.

Chinese concessional loans, in the low-to-nil interest environment that the world is currently operating in, are not on their own especially appealing, and as a consequence, African governments may look elsewhere unless they are bundled up with other incentives. In some

cases, these governments' debt burden is relatively high and may also act as a deterrent to borrowing. Additionally, the appetite for Beijing to take on further debt in resource-based economies – given this inability of some African governments to repay outstanding interest in the wake of the fall in commodity prices – is unclear at this stage.¹⁰³

The China-Africa Development Fund has been utilized for a variety of purposes, equity investments among them, and the support for SMEs offers finance to smaller Chinese firms to expand business on the continent. SMEs, of course, are traditionally viewed as instruments for innovation, transfer of technologies and employment creation. The named \$5 billion in grants is more open-ended and a variety of social and environmental projects could be supported through this mechanism. The most intriguing portion of the financial package is the China-Africa Industrial Fund, whose mandate is explicitly targeting, though details remain hazy at this stage, the manufacturing sector in Africa.

While the FOCAC VI Action Plan gives fair distribution of commitments to each of the ten themes of the conference (themselves, as already indicated above, aligned to the SDGs), when examining the actual financial framework set to underwrite these activities, all it seems to do is give greatest weight to the financing of trade, followed by the infrastructure components of the African development agenda, with a smaller financial programme directly targeting industrialization. Regarding social and environmental components of the SDGs, it is likely that some portion of the \$5 billion grants programme could be directed towards these issues. It should be noted in passing that there are other Chinese prior commitments such as \$10 million to combat the illegal wildlife trade in ivory and Chinese-dominated financial instruments – notably the BRICS or 'New' Bank – which have already started providing loans to 'green' projects in Africa.¹⁰⁴ This also holds for other aspects of the SDGs: China's support for peace and security in Africa, which has taken a number of forms, through pledges in 2015 to the UN of \$1 billion over ten years to underwrite peacekeeping and offers \$60 million in 'free assistance' to support capacity building at the African Union as well as 'in kind' support through the participation of Chinese peacekeepers in actual missions.¹⁰⁵

At the same, African Union officials convened a meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration, the African Economic Commission, along with Africa Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in Addis Ababa in April 2016, concluded that structural reform was necessary to achieve the SDGs and Agenda 2063.¹⁰⁶ The fact that African institutions at regional, national and subnational levels may be not be in a position to absorb and successfully manage the fiscal resources made available to them due to weakness or under-capacity is a problem that all external partners have commented upon. Interestingly, there are a number of FOCAC VI programmes aimed at 'capacitating' and training African government officials and managers, which speaks to this concern.

The overall focus on Chinese sources of finance to the exclusion of others reflects, of course, the pre-eminent position Beijing has in terms of available resources and its stated desire to use some of these to further China and African development interests makes them especially important to the process. There are, however, considerable sources outside of China that are significant and indeed necessary to the fulfilment of Agenda 2030 (see below).

Assessing the social provisions of development

There is only limited convergence between SDG 5 and FOCAC VI on the role of women and girls. It is easy to suggest that this was due to the lack of promotion by Africans or the Chinese negotiating the terms of the FOCAC VI Action Plan, but the commitment as presented in both SDGs and Agenda 2063 is clear. Certainly, the South African position as hosts of FOCAC VI, which has a robust if somewhat neglected legal and public commitment domestically to

improving women's rights, and the fact that their own representative, Nkosasana Dlamini-Zuma, chaired the AU Commission, suggests that there would have been a strong position on this question. Turning its back on social dimensions of development in areas such as women and gender equality, however, ignores not only the positive role that women have had in fuelling economic growth in developing countries but the very purpose of development as an agenda for change.

African governments need to reflect upon their own often stated commitments to promoting women and gender equality, as does the Chinese government. In both cases, recognizing the centrality of women to all aspects of development and upholding their status as equals in this process should result in a review and revision of their commitments through FOCAC VI.

Finding an implementation mechanism for effective engagement with Africa's partners: Mobilizing around a 'common African position on implementation of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs' for African government's National Development Planning, the RECS and the AU

Finding a mechanism which will ensure that global development partners work together with Africans to implement Agenda 2063 and the SDGs in a manner that is effective is of utmost importance if these aims are to be achieved. Integrating the SDGs into development planning is recognized to be considerably more complex given the sheer volume of goals, targets and indicators.¹⁰⁷ Mobilizing three platforms of governance – the national governments, the regional economic communities and the continental regional organization – to engage with global development partners is the most comprehensive approach to tackling this issue. By devising and promoting a 'Common African Position on Implementing Agenda 2063 and SDGs', these three tiers of African governance could forcefully articulate a shared position on the methodologies of implementation, including recognizable indicators and practices that will bring significant efficiencies and development gains. In so doing, African ownership of the process will not only be realized but will be reflected as global leadership towards achieving sustainable development in this generation.

As yet, no study has been conducted to assess the degree to which African countries have taken 'ownership' of Agenda 2063 and SDGs through deliberate integration of these goals and their accompanying targets into their national development plans. UN-led efforts to facilitate this process are underway, encouraging countries to 'mainstream SDGs into national policies, plans and strategies'.¹⁰⁸ Regional workshops in Africa, led by the UNDP, have sought to do the same with both Agenda 2063 and SDGs though there is no study of the actual take up of this process by national governments.¹⁰⁹

However, reviews conducted in 2014 on the integration of the MDGs into developing country national plans are indicative and may reveal some relevant trends. According to Sevedsavamdomst, only 32 developing countries of the 50 under study ever formally integrated the MDGs into their national development plans and this initial commitment tapered off as the MDG cycle reached its endpoint.¹¹⁰ Of the sub-Saharan African countries surveyed, ten of 13 African countries had deliberately aligned their national development plans to fit with the MDGs.¹¹¹ Interestingly, the study found a close correlation between countries which produced Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers under the auspices of the World Bank and those which included the MDGs into national development planning documents. This seems to suggest that convergence was a function of the degree of donor embeddedness in the national development policy of a given country as a key determinant of integration of MDGs. There already exist a number of 'toolkits' available aimed at assisting planning ministries to integrate the SDGs into national development plans, while the Economic Commission for Africa is in the process of refining an equivalent toolkit for Agenda 2063.¹¹²

Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are another platform for engagement with Africa's global development partners to ensure effective implementation of Agenda 2063 and SDGs. Though uneven in terms of their institutional depth and the degree of authority they command in key sectors, RECs nonetheless represent a commitment to strengthening intraregional development and connectivity. Depending on the level of sector cooperation and competency, RECs could build upon the ongoing efforts to encourage cross-regional infrastructure development (as we are seeing in the East African Community) by insisting that all global development partners incorporate a monitoring and evaluation component in the project that conforms to an established standard (see below).

Finally, the AU itself serves as a platform for engagement between the continent and its global development partners to ensure effective implementation of Agenda 2063 and SDGs. Given the structural and institutional constraints of the AU – exacerbated by the jealous guarding of sovereignty by national governments over certain issues – arguably the most significant contribution of the AU is twofold. First, as the recognized representative for the continent, its support has been critical to the development of the Common African Position, which steered Africa through Rio+20 and influenced not only Agenda 2063 but the SDGs as well. Secondly, building on this success, the AU could lead a follow-up process establishing a Common African Position on Implementation of Agenda 2063 and SDGs. The objective would be to mandate the global (emerging and traditional) development partners to adopt common methodologies and practices that would facilitate improved and more efficient allocation of resources towards African development. The AU Commission could play a crucial part in coordinating the process, linking up with national governments and RECs to support the initiative, as well as engaging with existing initiatives like the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation to contribute as necessary. Such a forthright demonstration of African agency would go a long way towards ensuring that development serves the continent's development agenda.

4 EMERGING AND TRADITIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS IN AFRICA: HOW THESE PARTNERS SUPPORT AFRICA TO ADDRESS THE SDGs AND AGENDA 2063

Beyond China, there are numerous emerging and traditional partnerships engaged with African development. Their approach towards Africa and how they have sought to utilize their resources to promote the SDGs and Agenda 2063 is instructive. Three countries, Japan, Brazil and India, will be examined to assess how they use their development cooperation to assist Africa to address the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

4.1 Japan

Japan's longstanding involvement in development assistance to Africa, coupled to its status as a member of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (the industrialized economies' key platform for coordinating development policies) and support for multilateral development institutions, makes it an interesting case to consider. Japan's development aid to Africa – officially designated as ODA in line with recognized criteria devised by the OECD-DAC countries¹¹³ – peaked in the late 1980s, when it was the largest single provider to the continent.¹¹⁴ Today, it continues to play an important role with direct aid disbursements of \$22,526 million in 2013.¹¹⁵ Japanese two-way trade with the continent in 2014 stood at \$24 billion and its investment profile that same year rose to \$10.5 billion.¹¹⁶

The Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Japanese Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund are key components of the country's aid programme. Like the French and more recently the Chinese, the Japanese government frames its ties with Africa through a regular high-level event with African countries, along with a number of other countries like Malaysia. The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), an outgrowth of the Global Partnership for Africa founded in the late 1980s and formerly launched in 1993, forms part of the backbone of Japanese development cooperation with Africa.¹¹⁷ Its membership of the G8 allowed it to play a role in mobilizing that grouping of leading industrialized economies to focus on African development, first seen at the G8 summit in Okinawa in 2000 and subsequently at the G8 Summit in Hokkaido in 2008.¹¹⁸ Japan has a longstanding record of engaging in trilateral cooperation in Africa and other developing regions of the world, most visibly in Mozambique (see next section on Brazil).

Japan's efforts to realize the MDGs by integrating their prescripts into Japanese ODA is a matter of record.¹¹⁹ The orientation of Japanese assistance during the MDGs' 15-year cycle was primarily focused on the health, education, water and sanitation sectors. However, economic stagnation over the last decade and a half saw a reduction in overall ODA to Africa. At the most recent TICAD VI held in Nairobi in August 2016, the Japanese Prime Minister reiterated the country's commitment to pursuing the SDGs and Agenda 2063 in Japanese ODA.¹²⁰ He announced a \$30 billion package for African infrastructure, healthcare and security as well as a programme aimed at training 10 million Africans over three years, including 30,000 engineers. The inclusion of a large contingent of Japanese businesses was indicative of the belief that there were greater economic opportunities in Africa than might have been the case in the past, while the launching of the Japan-Africa Public and Private Economic Forum was designed to foster greater public-private sector development cooperation.

An example of Japan's utilization of the SDGs in its own aid engagement is the focus on SDG 8 on employment. The Japanese government, working in conjunction with the International Labour Organization (ILO), sought to train 2,500 Kenyan youths in road building and maintenance in rural areas.¹²¹ Utilizing traditional Japanese techniques, the aim was not only to

build infrastructure but to create jobs for individuals and, in the longer term, support the establishment of small businesses in the country side. A Japanese non-profit organization, Community Road Empowerment, and the ILO organized the training course and provided financial assistance to support the project in Kenya.

4.2 Brazil

Brazil's development cooperation agenda towards Africa, while modest when compared to other emerging powers, is nonetheless influential, and especially so in the Lusophone countries of the continent. Brazilian approaches to development abroad are predicated, like that of China, on South-South Development Cooperation, which Brazilian officials characterize as being founded on the principles of 'horizontality', 'demand driven' and 'dialogue'.¹²² At the same time, a distinctive feature of Brazil's outlook towards African development is the belief that its own domestic development success in agricultural is especially relevant to the continent. Over the last decade, Brazil has invested \$10 billion in Africa (2009), while its two-way trade has jumped from \$4.3 billion in 2000 to \$26.5 billion in 2012 (subsequently falling with the economic downturn in Brazil).¹²³ Though the Brazilian government does not have an equivalent forum with Africa like FOCAC, through its promotion and participation in Lusophone associations – *Países Africanos de Língua Portuguesa* (PALOP) and *Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa* (CPLP) – it is able to engage with African counterparts. Moreover, the formation of India-Brazil-South Africa forum in 2003, augmented (and seemingly replaced) by BRICS with the inclusion of South Africa after 2010, provides another linkage with the continent.

The structure of Brazilian cooperation is built around three pillars, namely the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (*Agência Brasileira de Cooperação*, or ABC), the Brazilian Development Bank (BNDES) and the Brazilian Import-Export Bank. Though the Brazilian rhetoric of autonomy through South-South Development Cooperation has often been combative, in fact, its institutions have been willing to partner with OECD-DAC countries, UN agencies and other developing countries. Indeed, trilateral cooperation forms an important part of the Brazilian strategic approach to development in Africa and it has signed formalized agreements with JICA and USAID. The degree to which the expansion of Brazilian development cooperation was tied to the vision of its president, Lula da Silva, became clear with the sharp reduction in ABC's budget under his successor, Dilma Rousseff, from \$65 million in 2010 to \$36 million two years later in 2012.¹²⁴

The iconic Brazilian development project for the African continent, ProSavana, is the largest trilateral cooperation programme of its kind pursued by Brazil and one that has become its most controversial.¹²⁵ It aligns directly with SDG 8 and 9 and indirectly with SDG 1. ABC, partnering with JICA and the Mozambican Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG) as well as working with Embrapa (the Brazilian agricultural research corporation), sought to transfer the experience of introducing commercial agriculture in Brazil's northeast (a joint project with the Japanese) to Mozambique's Nacala Corridor. Projected to run over 20 years, ProSavana would introduce commercial agriculture on a grand scale, integrating multi-million dollar foreign investments with Brazilian agribusiness working with local farmers in a contract-farming basis in three provinces covering 35 million hectares. In exchange for their crop production, these farmers would receive seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and extension services. The involvement, though not formally so, of Brazilian multinationals like Vale and Oderbrecht in the construction of supportive road and port infrastructure, underscored the massive ambition of this development initiative.

Unfortunately, the precepts which guide Brazilian cooperation seem to have been largely neglected in the case of ProSavana. According to one study, the Strategic Plan launched in March 2013 was formulated by Japanese and Brazilian consultants with 'very limited input not only from local communities and organized civil society but also from the Mozambican government'.¹²⁶ As plans to remove communities estimated at upwards of 4 million people

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without consultation became known, the result was, predictably, that these actors became incensed, and worked in conjunction with civil society organizations in Japan and Brazil to conduct a campaign of protest. The impact initially brought the project to a halt and, following efforts to engage with provincial and local officials and civil society and put together a new Strategic Plan, the now cash-strapped Brazilians seem to have decided to reduce their participation in the project.

4.3 India

India's development cooperation with Africa stretches back to the early 1970s, when the bulk of the programmes were focused on technical assistance and exchanges, classic South–South Development Cooperation. The presence of a substantial Indian diaspora in Eastern and Southern Africa notwithstanding, New Delhi's approach to the continent has been one of relative neglect. Indeed, it was the Indian business community which spotted the opportunities for trade and investment in Africa, investing \$400 million from 2005 to 2007 and supporting the creation of the Confederation of Indian Industries' annual Conclave on Africa Project Partnerships.¹²⁷ The first Indian-African Summit was held in New Delhi in 2008 with 14 African governments participating under the auspices of the AU, a second summit was convened in Addis Ababa in 2011 and another – the largest of its kind – in New Delhi in October 2015. It bears mentioning that India's role in multilateral peacekeeping on the continent has been longstanding, starting with a leadership role as part of the UN Mission to the Congo in 1960.

India's two-way trade with Africa rocketed from US\$5.3 billion in 2001 to US\$72 billion in 2015.¹²⁸ Nearly 90 percent of African exports to India are heavily concentrated in energy resources and other commodities, while 98 percent of Indian exports to African markets are value-added products.¹²⁹ India's Export-Import Bank plays an important role in supporting commercial activities and accessing resources and markets in Africa. Lacking a centralized aid agency, and decidedly opposed to aligning its policies to the OECD-DAC, the Indian government has disbursed grants and other forms of assistance that fall outside of the commercially minded exchanges, mostly through the Ministry of External Affairs, until 2012, when it created the Development Partnerships Administration.¹³⁰ Indian investments to the continent are not well covered, so figures vary from US\$14.1 billion in 2011 to suggestions that it was over US\$35 billion.¹³¹

Indian and African officials are enthusiastic about the potential that public-private partnerships hold for aligning their own trade and investment policy to the development strategies of individual African countries. This was recognized by participants at the first India-Africa Forum Summit which endorsed this approach as part of the cooperation strategy that was formalized through the promulgation of an India-African Union Framework Agreement.¹³²

The integration and implementation of the SDGs/Agenda 2063 into the Indian approach to development cooperation is reflected in a number of different ways, but perhaps most readily through its work in strengthening human development and capacity building on the continent. India joined the African Capacity Building Foundation back in 2005, providing \$1 million to support education and training programmes in that year and carrying out that educational work up to the present.¹³³ This support includes the India-Africa Institute for Foreign Trade (Indian National University of Education and Planning and the University of Burundi); India-Africa Institute of Information Technology (Botswana); Tata Motors partnership with the Engineering Department, University of Pretoria (South Africa); Pan Africa e-Network collaboration between the AU and the Indian government to provide tele-education to leading Indian universities in finance, business and IT.¹³⁴

4.4 Comparing Africa's Engagement with China, Japan, Brazil and India – strength in diversity or diversifying dependency?

The possibility of conducting a comparison of the differing approaches adopted by emerging and traditional partners based on the short surveys above is, as indicated in the methodology section above (1.2), limited by a number of factors.

First, the absence of data, especially longitudinal data collected over a period of time, on the development cooperation programmes for countries like China and India, restricts any efforts at comparison. Without a national economic development or aid agency in these particular countries, and the concomitant policy directives to capture appropriate data, there is no way of assessing relative aid effectiveness beyond simple descriptions of volumes of expenditure (if that is indeed even provided).

Secondly, unlike the OECD-DAC countries with their conscious construction of a harmonizing set of indicators and procedures among members, the emerging partners have largely (with exceptions like South Korea and Brazil) avoided utilizing any shared indicators or methodologies outside of the loose adherence to the ideals of South-South Development Cooperation. Without this common set of indicators to benchmark expenditure and progress, monitoring and evaluation becomes a moot task and, again, comparison deeply challenged.

Thirdly, when it comes to SSDC, the explicit orientation is towards technical cooperation, in-kind exchanges, technology transfers and, more recently, the mobilization of 'Southern' capital and factors of production to carry out development projects. As noted in the section above, this project-based approach eschews a commitment to assess impact in favour of an outcomes approach (essentially focusing on the fact that the bridge was built, not necessarily whether its construction produced direct or even indirect spill overs in terms of local employment, skills transfer etc). This further inhibits the ability to conduct a genuine comparison.

One could, however, say that the diversity of approaches utilized by emerging partners corresponds with an expansion of the choices available for African development. Certainly, analysis has emphasized the constructive impact that the opening up of alternative approaches to development emanating from the successful experiences of other developing countries has had on Africa.¹³⁵ At the same time, the disquiet with various problems tied to emerging partners' economic engagement and aid policies persists in some African quarters. Indeed, noted scholar Ian Taylor has provocatively suggested that Africa may be a case study of mere 'diversification of dependency' through its engagement with emerging partners, a position which needs to be seriously considered in light of the issues raised above.¹³⁶

4.5 Reflections on Global Partnerships for Development

The centrality of SDG 17's call for reviving and enhancing Global Partnerships is arguably the linchpin of the entire SDGs process and, though weight is necessarily given to domestic sources of agency and ownership, is understood to be crucial to the success of Agenda 2063. The first Global Partnership Forum held in Mexico City in April 2014 confirmed that the OECD-DAC efforts to better engage and influence emerging countries in the context of the Paris Agenda have so far largely failed. UNDP officials indicated in Mexico that the agency participated in the Global Partnership process from a 'technical' point of view without being able to represent 'politically' the United Nations system. The African Partnership Forum, created in 2003 as part of the build-up to the G8 Summit in Evian, linked the G8 to the NEPAD Secretariat and ultimately AU structures.

This was the background to a call for a revival of Global Partnerships, one in which the global financial crisis had taken a toll on OECD-DAC donor countries and had seen the rise of

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emerging powers like China and, concurrently, that of South-South Development Cooperation. Yet, it was clear to participants at the Rio+20 summit in 2012 that neither approach was enough to enable countries to meet the challenges of implementing a sustainable development agenda. The chairperson of the G77 + China, Virachai Plasai, speaking four years later, underscored the dilemma facing partnerships for development:

‘South-South and Triangular Cooperation are not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South Cooperation ... As South-South and Triangular cooperation are dear to the heart of the Group, we wish to see the momentum created by this initiative to promote South-South and Triangular cooperation be carried forward in other important areas apart from climate change.’¹³⁷

Working collaboratively is the only possible way to make the kind of major gains called for by the Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) and Africa We Want (Agenda 2063). If leading states and their African counterparts cannot find a formula that facilitates this process – and in that respect, perhaps, FOCAC does provide a model of a new kind of partnership – then these lofty ambitions will remain unrealized. TICAD and the Africa-India Summit, which both share aspects of FOCAC but offer unique features oriented towards addressing particular development dilemmas in Africa. These include, in the case of TICAD, relative to other processes, a far-reaching consultative process that engages with African participants at government, business and civil society levels.¹³⁸ India’s engagement with the continent, driven by the commercial concerns of the private sector and running in parallel technical assistance and training programmes focused on human resource development, increasingly focuses on public-private partnerships to deliver development. Another possibility is found in enhancing the collaborative relationship with the OECD-DAC’s Africa Global Partnership Platform, or giving consideration to new initiatives by old cooperation partners like Germany, which recently launched its ‘Marshall Plan for Africa’.¹³⁹

All of this activism by emerging and traditional partners is strongly suggestive of the fact that the conditions for collaborating between them and Africa to realize the SDGs and Agenda 2063 are more auspicious than ever before. As noted above, approaches like Trilateral cooperation – which bring together the resources, skills and experiences of global development partners in a complementary fashion – offer further possibilities for leveraging resources in the service of the implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. The ongoing efforts to coordinate the UK’s Department for International Development and the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture in Africa are echoed in other examples, such as the French development aid agency, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency and Francophone Africa.¹⁴⁰

Moving beyond the statist approach, civil society, private foundations and international development NGOs offer insights and alternative avenues of cooperation that could be usefully engaged as well. Global development partnerships that include private foundations – with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation serving as a prominent example – are making inroads into tackling HIV/Aids by working with the Botswana government.¹⁴¹ This is especially the case for cooperation and partnership between African NGOs and their counterparts in emerging and traditional countries. The response to the Ebola crisis in 2015-2016 highlighted how emerging and traditional partners, coordinating with local African governments and local civil society, international NGOs and multilateral institutions, can effectively mobilize their resources to address a growing pandemic. The central role that the Chinese government played in financing and providing technical support to local governments is especially heartening, demonstrating that the world’s leading developing country is able to provide leadership and resources when called upon.¹⁴²

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To sum up the findings of this analysis: there is evident and clear overlap in the SDGs/Agenda 2030, Agenda 2063 and the FOCAC Action Plan, leading to a conclusion that China is committed to playing an important role in fostering the attainment of these goals. The FOCAC Action Plan's orientation touches on many of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 directly, with a few exceptions, through a detailed set of projects and commitments. The project-led approach adopted by the Chinese means that there is a wide spread of initiatives involved. Concerns may exist around the means to be employed to realize these aims: preliminary assessments suggest that the \$60 billion financial package is weighted towards trade first and foremost, with infrastructure-financed loans occupying a significant second place, and smaller provisions reserved for other aspects of the development agenda linked to manufacturing and employment creation. The degree to which this occurs will be determined by the utilization of the resources on offer by China, how Africans leverage these resources in pursuit of these aims, and their successful implementation. Part of that leverage is acquired by learning from other developing partners and encouraging them to work more closely through trilateral cooperation on promoting African development. In certain respects, it should be relatively straightforward, as:

'Africa is the only continent that has consistently provided a common position on issues addressed in key global summits and conferences. These common positions represented a shared African position in presenting the continent's ambitions and expectations and informed related debates at all levels, and, laid out the relevant issues for the Africa Africans want. In the same vein, Africa has been a key player in the negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.'¹⁴³

Africans own this global process to an unprecedented degree, as never before, both in terms of their involvement in developing it and in terms of the revived material conditions on the continent. Part and parcel of the enhanced African economic performance is the intertwining of African relations with that of more 'established' emerging countries like China. Moving away from its traditional North-South axis, Africa's economic ties with the world's second largest economy is diversifying beyond state-led initiatives based on energy and infrastructure development as Chinese enterprises in Africa seek out export and investment opportunities in its growing markets – a trend that could be reversed if global demand stagnates. A most compelling feature of Africa's latecomer development status is the prospect this offers of learning from fellow developing countries whose experiences in overcoming development challenges cohere with the contemporary needs of the continent. Realizing the common objectives contained within the SDGs, Agenda 2063 and FOCAC will require leadership, finance, institutional resilience and a truly global effort of historic proportions. As one South African observer and head of a Confucius Centre, David Monyae, put it, 'How the EU and China fare in assisting the African Union implement its Agenda 2063 vision will be crucial to how both are viewed by generations of Africans.'¹⁴⁴ The following specific recommendations to the African governments, AU and RECs, African civil society organizations, the People's Republic of China, and other emerging powers and other partners are also pertinent. These are to:

African governments

- Make sure that efforts are conducted and sustained over time to integrate the provisions of SDGs and Agenda 2063 more thoroughly into National Development Planning. One of the findings of the review of the MDGs was that its shortcomings were tied to the failure to integrate the MDGs into national development planning by African governments; doing so with the SDGs and Agenda 2063 would mark an important step towards implementation.
- Foster the conditions for domestic resource mobilization through support for revenue generation. A key provision of Agenda 2063 is aimed at enhancing the role of domestic

resource mobilization and tax revenue collection and compliance. The African Capacity Report 2015 outlines how limited the engagement with key initiatives such as the African Tax Administrative Forum and the Collaborative African Budget Reform are to date, which provides workable strategies for realizing an improvement in domestic resource mobilization.

- Reflect upon your commitment to promote women and gender equality and make more of an effort to include SDG 5 in development assistance provisions of FOCAC VI.

The African Union (AU) and regional economic communities (RECs)

- Consider leading a process towards developing a 'Common African Position on Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs'. Make sure that efforts are conducted and sustained over time to integrate the provisions of SDGs and Agenda 2063 more thoroughly into National Development Planning. Concurrently, the Common African Position on Implementation could also promote the use of programmatic evaluations of project impact as a qualitative measure of achievement in FOCAC-based projects. This would help facilitate better outcomes and more efficient use of development assistance.
- Encourage China and other development partners to engage in trilateral cooperation to work with China and African governments on development assistance to leverage knowledge and pool resources in pursuit of SDGs and Agenda 2030.

African civil society organizations

- Encourage China and other emerging partners to provide greater clarity on the criteria to be used for the South-South Aid Fund and the South-South Cooperation Fund on Climate Change to assist planning by policy makers for African development. In particular, encourage more transparency on aid data, financial disbursements and the harmonization of a standard set of indicators by African governments, China and other emerging powers. This would encourage cooperation and knowledge transfer between all of these entities to improve development outcomes.
- Reach out to international NGOs, especially those in emerging partnership countries, to develop coordinated positions and strategies that foster accountable and inclusive development in Africa.

The People's Republic of China

- Consider producing more transparent data on development cooperation, including financial data that would allow for stronger analysis of aid efficiency and impact. Adhering to a standardized set of indicators that reflect prevailing and recognized standards used by the African Union and within the UN system would further this ambition.
- Consider introducing programmatic evaluations of project impact to FOCAC-based projects as a qualitative measure of achievement. This would help facilitate better outcomes and more efficient use of development assistance. The responsibility for monitoring and evaluation should be shared by China and African governments, while the AU and RECs through the Common African Position on Implementation could set the overall agenda with China and other global development partners.
- Provide greater clarity on the criteria to be used for the South-South Aid Fund and the South-South Cooperation Fund on Climate Change to assist planning by policy makers involved in the FOCAC process.
- Extend your commitment to trilateral cooperation on development assistance to leverage knowledge and pool resources in pursuit of SDGs and Agenda 2030.

Other emerging powers and other partners

- Actively engage with China and African governments on development assistance to support the implementation of the above recommendations, and leverage knowledge and pool resources in pursuit of SDGs and Agenda 2030.
- Consider aligning your development assistance more closely, if it isn't already, towards the promotion of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 in Africa. Seek to coordinate policy approaches with other emerging powers and traditional partners through established multilateral forum in conjunction with African continental, regional and national policy communities.

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